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33

# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

HIS CONNECTION WITH

THE MONROE DOCTRINE (1823)

BY

WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD

AND WITH

EMANCIPATION UNDER MARTIAL LAW (1819-1842)

BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

[REPRINTED FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY, FOR JANUARY, 1902]

CAMBRIDGE  
JOHN WILSON AND SON  
University Press  
1902

143740  
2/10/17.







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AND

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AND

## THE MONROE DOCTRINE (1823).

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I AM able to use in this place only a part of the unpublished material I have found bearing upon the genesis of the Monroe Doctrine. Nor can the full connection of this new material with what has already been printed be developed, as the story would take me back to 1817 and forward to 1828, were I to attempt a full relation. I therefore confine myself to some important papers, merely adding that I have found other quite as important papers, which will receive attention at a later time. The notable enunciation of the doctrine that America was no longer open to colonization by any European power is hardly touched upon in the papers now printed. It was a doctrine that admittedly came from John Quincy Adams, and there has never been any doubt as to its authorship. With what remains of the Monroe doctrine a reasonable doubt has been maintained; but I think the documents now published will show that no member of Monroe's Cabinet, except his Secretary of State, held a positive opinion on the general phases of Canning's proposals and of the Russian communications, or succeeded in attaining a position which was defensible from every point of view. Monroe himself has long been judged as unlikely to take so extreme a stand in the face of allied Europe, for he was by nature a timid man, and was at this time in poor health. He had had a large experience in diplomatic service, but it was on the side of failure and disappointment. This is not to be wondered at, for a long spoon was needed to sup with George Canning in his days of anti-Jacobinism, or with Talleyrand under a chief even more unscrupulous than himself. It is difficult to see the "radical" Monroe of 1794 in the presiding genius of the era of good feeling.



In an appendix will be found certain despatches from Richard Rush to the Secretary of State. Rush, in his "Memoranda of a Residence at the Court of London," prints three of his despatches relating to his conferences with Canning on the affairs of South America, as follows: No. 325, August 23, 1823 (p. 415); No. 326, August 28 (p. 420); and No. 331, September 19 (p. 429). Mr. Adams's reply covered not only these despatches, but also Nos. 323, 330, 332, 334, and 336, which are now printed for the first time, with the notes of Canning enclosed in them or referred to in the other communications.<sup>1</sup> From the Monroe papers I take a private letter from Richard Rush to Monroe, dated September 15, and from the same source, a letter from Daniel Sheldon, Secretary of the American Legation at Paris, to John Quincy Adams, dated October 30. From the Adams manuscripts at Quincy I take letters from Richard Rush to the Secretary of State, dated November 26 and December 27, with a private and confidential note from George Canning to Richard Rush, dated December 13. In these twelve letters the story of the English advances is told, with all the details, save such as were given in the three important despatches published by Rush in his "Memoranda," and they constitute the first chapter or division of my material.

Unfortunately, the "Memoirs of John Quincy Adams" contain no entries from September 11, 1823, when the writer was still at Quincy, and November 7, when the first effects of Canning's advances had passed away. We are therefore without any record of the effect they produced upon Adams and the members of the Cabinet. Upon the President we know they had a profound influence, leading him to turn for advice and assistance to Jefferson and Madison, to whom he sent copies of these confidential papers, — a somewhat unusual step, and not a little indiscreet. For an accident would have placed Rush in a most awkward position, and could not have been pleasant for Adams, who knew nothing of this reference.<sup>2</sup> Monroe's letter to Jefferson has never been printed, and was as follows:

<sup>1</sup> These papers are taken from the files of the Department of State, and by the courtesy of that Department I obtained copies.

<sup>2</sup> "Be so good as to send the copies mentioned in our meeting to-day, of the correspondence between Mr. Rush and Mr. Canning, since I deem the subject of the highest importance." James Monroe to Adams, Washington, October 11, 1823. MS.



## MONROE TO JEFFERSON.

OAKHILL October 17<sup>th</sup> 1823

DEAR SIR, — I transmit to you two despatches, which were receiv'd from Mr. Rush, while I was lately in Washington, which involve interests of the highest importance. They contain two letters from Mr. Canning, suggesting designs of the holy alliance, against the Independence of S<sup>o</sup> America, & proposing a cooperation, between G. Britain & the U States, in support of it, against the members of that alliance. The project aims in the first instance, at a mere expression of opinion, somewhat in the abstract, but which it is expected by Mr. Canning, will have a great political effect, by defeating the combination. By Mr. Rush's answers, which are also inclosed, you will see the light in which he views the subject, & the extent to which he may have gone. Many important considerations are involved in this proposition. 1<sup>st</sup> Shall we entangle ourselves, at all, in European politicks, & wars, on the side of any power, against others, presuming that a concert by agreement, of the kind proposed, may lead to that result? 2<sup>d</sup>. If a case can exist, in which a sound maxim may, & ought to be departed from, is not the present instance, precisely that case? 3<sup>d</sup> Has not the epoch arriv'd when G. Britain must take her stand, either on the side of the monarchs of Europe, or of the U States, & in consequence, either in favor of Despotism or of liberty & may it not be presum'd, that aware of that necessity, her government, has seiz'd on the present occurrence, as that, which it deems, the most suitable, to announce & mark the commencement of that career.

My own impression is that we ought to meet the proposal of the British gov<sup>t</sup>, & to make it known, that we would view an interference on the part of the European powers, and especially an attack on the Colonies, by them, as an attack on ourselves, presuming that if they succeeded with them, they would extend it to us. I am sensible however of the extent, & difficulty of the question, & shall be happy to have yours, & Mr. Madison's opinions on it. I do not wish to trouble either of you with small objects, but the present one is vital, involving the high interests, for which we have so long & so faithfully, & harmoniously, contended together. Be so kind as to enclose to him the despatches, with an intimation of the motive. With great respect &c

JAMES MONROE

Recd Oct 23<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the Jefferson MSS. in the Department of State, Washington, D. C.

"I forward you two most important letters sent to me by the President and add his letter to me by which you will perceive his *primâ facie* views. This you will be so good as to return to me, and forward the others to him." Jefferson to Madison, October 24, 1823. MS.

The result of this consultation were the letters from Jefferson to Monroe, October 24th, from Madison to Monroe, October 30th, and from Madison to Jefferson, November 1st, which are too well known and accessible to require even a summary of their contents. It is, however, worth noting that Monroe kept these replies by him, not showing them to Adams until November 15th, or nearly two weeks after their receipt.

While this interchange of opinions on the Canning proposals was taking place, a new element was introduced by the stand taken by Russia. It was not unusual for the ruler of that Empire to take the governments of other countries into his confidence and display before them some of the political principles which controlled his actions or explain some of the motives which actuated his councils. As a member of the Holy Alliance, he was bound by its decisions, and was often made the spokesman of its policy. Such utterances usually took the form of circular letters addressed to the different cabinets of Europe, and, so far as I am able to discover, had not for some years been addressed to the United States. This was only natural, for the United States had deliberately isolated itself from European councils, and could hardly expect to be deemed worthy of being taken into the secret conclaves of the Powers dealing with matters on which our representatives were ever asserting they could give no opinion or pledge of action. Further, the very political system of the United States was so opposed to that dominating Europe, that ground for common action could not be found. If England, with her relatively liberal system and many mutual interests with continental Europe, found herself unable to act with the Holy Alliance, it was out of the question for the United States, without any of these interests, to take part in their proceedings. There was every reason for keeping entirely aloof, and, even in a matter that did concern our country, like the negotiations on the slave trade, it was only as a matter of favor that the United States was informed of the conclusions, and as a matter of grace invited to give its adherence to the result. It was therefore an unusual episode to receive from the Russian minister communications bearing upon public policy. The nature of those communications is best explained in the elaborate memorandum prepared by Mr. Adams for submission to the President.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Printed *post*, p. 26.



In the first week in November three despatches from Rush reached the Department,<sup>1</sup> and the Memoirs again begin to record the Cabinet meetings. To Canning's original proposals there was no exception to be taken, except on the ground of a certain vagueness as to the possibility of entire co-operation. He had in his five heads expressed only what the government of the United States had already accepted as its policy. The guarded utterances of Rush in his exchange of notes with Canning had gone as far as it was possible to go without positive instructions from the administration, and those instructions could have been issued without unduly binding our government to follow Great Britain in every contingency. The President, by the very form of his questions to Jefferson, implied that he would even favor a departure in this instance from the traditional policy of isolation. But Canning blundered. He intimated to Rush that the Alliance had intentions against the late Spanish colonies of South America, and urged the American minister to enter into a definite and binding compact. Yet he did not tell Rush from what source he had obtained this information, and thus gave rise to a suspicion that his solicitude was not entirely disinterested, or his urgency was not calculated to compromit Rush for the benefit of the British government. Upon the despatches from Rush, Adams commented: "The object of Canning appears to have been to obtain some public pledge from the government of the United States, ostensibly against the forcible interference of the Holy Alliance between Spain and South America; but really or especially against the acquisition to the United States themselves of any part of the Spanish-American possessions. . . . By joining with her, therefore, in her proposed declaration, we give her a substantial and perhaps inconvenient pledge against ourselves, and really obtain nothing in return."<sup>2</sup>

In place of a co-operation with Great Britain, Adams favored seizing the opportunity offered by the communications from the Russian minister. The government of the United States, while declining the overture of Great Britain, could thus take its stand against the Holy Alliance. "It would be more candid,

<sup>1</sup> These were numbered 330, 331, and 332, and were dated September 8, 19, and 20 respectively. No. 330 is endorsed as received November 5, while Nos. 331 and 332 were received November 3.

<sup>2</sup> Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, VI. 177, 178.



as well as more dignified, to avow our principles explicitly to Russia and France, than to come in as a cock-boat in the wake of the British man-of-war." This was the policy that was discussed under many forms by the Cabinet during the month of November, and for which Adams fought so well.

It was at this stage that the first of our Adams manuscripts was submitted to the Cabinet, — the draft of his reply to Baron Tuyll. It appears to have been prepared on October 18, two days after the letter from Baron Tuyll had been received, but it was not laid before the Cabinet till November 7. As the communications with the Russian Minister had been part verbal and part in writing, the Secretary thought it would be only proper to reply in the same manner. To answer the whole in one written note might place the Baron in an awkward predicament. But he warned the President that "the answer to be given to Baron Tuyll, the instructions to Mr. Rush relative to the proposals of Mr. Canning, those to Mr. Middleton at St. Petersburg, and those to the minister who must be sent to France, must all be part of a combined system of policy and adapted to each other."

The draft of the note to Baron de Tuyll was as follows: —

#### ADAMS'S DRAFT.<sup>1</sup>

THE BARON DE TUYLL,

Envoy Extraordinary & Minister Plenipotentiary from Russia.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE. WASHINGTON, <sup>[18 October]</sup><sub>15 Nov<sup>r</sup></sub> 1823.

SIR, — I have had the honour of receiving your Note of the 1<sup>st</sup> inst<sup>t</sup> communicating the information that His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias has determined in no case *whatsoever* to receive any agent whatsoever either from the Government of the Republic of Columbia, or from any other of the Governments de facto, which owe their existence to the Events of which the new World has for some years past been the theatre.

Influenced by the considerations which prescribe it as a duty to independent *Christian Nations of Christians* to entertain with each other, the friendly relations which sentiments of humanity and their mutual interests require, and satisfied that those of South America had become irrevocably Independent of Spain the Government of the United States B [have interchanged Ministers Plenipotentiary with the Republic of Colombia, have appointed Ministers of the same Rank to the Govern-

<sup>1</sup> What is enclosed in brackets was struck out by the President. Words in *italic* were also omitted from the final form of this letter.



ments of Mexico, Buenos Ayres and Chili, have received a Minister and other Diplomatic Agents from Mexico, and will continue to receive and send Agents Diplomatic and Commercial, in their intercourse with the other American Independant Nations, as in the performance of their social duties, and in the pursuit of their lawful Interests they shall find *expedient* proper. While regretting that the political principles maintained by His Imperial Majesty and his allies, have not yet led the Imperial Government to the same result, and that they have not seen fit to receive the *diplomatic agent* Minister of Peace said to have been commissioned by the Republican Government of Colombia, to reside near his Imperial Majesty, the Government of the United States, respecting in others that self-dependent Sovereignty which they exercise themselves, receive from you the information of his Majesty's determination on this subject in the Spirit of Candour, frankness, and of amicable disposition with which it is given.】

D. I avail myself of the occasion to reiterate to you, Sir, the assurance of my distinguished Consideration.

C. From the information contained in your Note, it appears that the political Principles maintained by His Imperial Majesty and his allies, have not led the Imperial Government to the same result. I am instructed by the President to assure you, that the Government of the United States respecting in others the Independence of the Sovereign authority, which they exercise themselves, receive the communication of H. I. M's determination on that subject in the Spirit of Candour, frankness and of amicable disposition with which it is made. D.

#### MONROE'S SUGGESTED CHANGES.<sup>1</sup>

B. The government of the U States thought it proper to acknowledge their independance, in March 1822., by an act which was then published to the world. This government has since interchanged ministers with the republic of Columbia, has appointed ministers of the same rank to the governments of Mexico, Buenos Ayres, & Chili, has received a minister & other diplomatic agents from Mexico, and preservd, in other respects the same intercourse, with those new States, that they have with other powers.

By a recurrence to the message of the President, a copy of which is enclosed, you will find, that this measure was adopted on great consideration; that the attention of this gov. had been called, to the contest, between the parent country & the Colonies, from an early period that it had marked the course of events with impartiality, & had become perfectly satisfied, that Spain could not reestablish her authority over them: that in fact the new States were completely independant. C.

<sup>1</sup> See Monroe's letter on p. 13.



[Under those circumstances my gov<sup>t</sup> has heard with great regret, the information containd in your note that the political principles main-  
taind by his Imperial Majesty & his allies, have not yet led the Imperial  
gov<sup>t</sup>, to the same result. I am instructed however by the President to  
assure you, that this communication of H. I. M.'s determination, on this  
subject has been receivd in the spirit of candour, frankness, & of  
amicable disposition with which it is given.]

It was Calhoun who objected to the words *Christian*, annexed to independent nations, and *of peace*, added to the word *minister*. In spite of Adams explaining that "all the point of my note was in these two words, as my object was to put the Emperor in the wrong in the face of the world as much as possible," they were struck from the draft. The cabinet meeting came to an end before the form of the note had been determined, but developed some difference of opinion upon the manner of replying to the Russian communications. With the President Adams agreed to confine his written reply to the purport of the Baron's written note, and to see the Baron again upon the verbal part of his communication. This would be limited to an expression of the intention on the part of the United States to continue to remain neutral.

Before the Secretary could see the Russian Minister on the next day Monroe began to have doubts, and he wrote the following note:—

JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 8, 1823.

DEAR SIR, — I called to confer a moment with you respecting the concerns depending with the minister of Russia, but not meeting with you, and hearing that you are expected to have an interview with the minister of Russia, to day, I drop you a few lines on that subject.

In the interview, I think that it will be proper, to extend your conversation & enquiries to every point, which seems to be embraced, by his note, & informal communication, with a view to make it the basis of all subsequent measures, either with Congress, or through Mr. Rush with the British gov<sup>t</sup>. If you see no impropriety, in it, I think that I would ask him, whether he intended, by the terms "political principles" to refer to the governments established, in the new states, as distinguishing them from those of Europe.<sup>1</sup> the strict import justifies the conclu-

<sup>1</sup> The Baron said the words were used "in the instructions of the Government to him, and he understood them to have reference to the right of supremacy of Spain over her colonies. I had so understood them myself, and had not entertained a moment's doubt as to their meaning." Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, VI. 182.



sion that he does, and that is supported by all the recent movements of the allied powers, in Europe. Still to give it that construction, without his sanction, in this form, might be objected to hereafter. I merely suggest this for your consideration, to which I add, that if there be cause to doubt the propriety of the step, you had better decline it, for further reflection, especially as other opportunities will present themselves, in future conferences with him, on the same subject.

On the other point I need add nothing at this time. Indeed I do not know that I can say anything, in addition to what was suggested on it yesterday. It is probable that something may occur in your conference, which may make it proper, to enlarge the sphere of the communication.

J. M.<sup>1</sup>

JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

DEAR SIR, — I enclose you a modification, of your note in reply to that of the Russian minister for your consideration. The part for which it is proposed to be a substitute is marked with a pencil — tho' much of that thus marked is retained. You will be able to decide how far such a modification, will be proper from what may have taken place in your conference with the minister. The object is, to soften the communication, in some degree, without losing any portion of the decision called for by the occasion.

J. M.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 10, 1823.<sup>2</sup>

The President's message was to be sent to Congress early in December, and the usual procedure was followed in composing that document. The head of each Department drew up a memorandum of the important matters pertaining to his Department, both matters that were pending and matters that had been accomplished. On November 13th, Adams made such a memorandum for his Department, but found the President still "altogether unsettled in his own mind" on the answer to be given to Canning's proposals, and "alarmed, far beyond anything that I could have conceived possible, with the fear that the Holy Alliance are about to restore immediately all South America to Spain." In this view he was supported by Calhoun, a man who certainly did not err on the side of a cheerful optimism, and the surrender of Cadiz to the

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* In noting the receipt of this letter from the President, Adams says, "I think also of proposing another modification." The "Memoirs" (VI. 184) tell us what this modification was — "leaving out entirely the expression of regret — which he approved."



French was the immediate cause of this despair. Adams pressed for a decision, either to accept or to decline Canning's advances, and a despatch could then be prepared conformable to either decision.<sup>1</sup>

If Calhoun was the alarmist member of the Cabinet, Adams was at the other extreme. As well expect Chimborazo to sink beneath the ocean, he believed, as to look to the Holy Alliance to restore the Spanish dominion upon the American continent. If the South Americans really had so fragile governments as Calhoun represented them to be, there was every reason not to involve the United States in their fate. With indecision in the President and dark apprehension in Calhoun, Adams alone held a definite opinion, and in clear phrase he expressed it in summation of the Cabinet discussion : —

“I thought we should bring the whole answer to Mr. Canning's proposals to a test of right and wrong. Considering the South Americans as independent nations, they themselves, and no other nation, had the *right* to dispose of their condition. *We* have no right to dispose of them, either alone or in conjunction with other nations. Neither have any other nations the right of disposing of them without their consent. This principle will give us a clue to answer all Mr. Canning's questions with candor and confidence, and I am to draft a dispatch accordingly.”<sup>2</sup>

Before the draft had been prepared two more despatches were received from Rush, dated the 2d and 10th of October, indicating a decided change in Canning's tone, and almost an indifference on his part to pursue further the project of united action. The immediate cause of this cooling in enthusiasm could not then be known to our minister, but it was to be found in a conference between Canning and Prince de Polignac on Spanish affairs, during which the representative of France gave positive assurances on the lines of Canning's ideas. The Prince de Polignac declared, —

“That his Government believed it to be utterly hopeless to reduce Spanish America to the state of its former relations to Spain ;

“That France disclaimed, on Her part, any intention or desire to avail Herself of the present State of the Colonies, or of the present situation of France towards Spain, to appropriate to Herself any part of the Spanish Possessions in America, or to obtain for Herself any exclusive advantages ;

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 185.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 186.



"And that, like England, She would willingly see the Mother Country in possession of superior commercial advantages, by amicable arrangements; and would be contented, like Her, to rank, after the Mother Country, among the most favoured nations;

"Lastly, that She abjured, in any case, any design of acting against the Colonies by force of arms."<sup>1</sup>

The draft of the reply to all of Rush's despatches on Canning's proposals was prepared on November 17th, and given to the President on the same day. Whatever may have been the general intention of Adams in preparing this draft, the scope of his policy was greatly enlarged by certain communications made by the Russian Minister. It was sufficiently aggravating to have been lectured on political principles in the note instructing the minister to make it known that the Emperor would receive no representatives from the late Spanish colonies. The few political remarks in reply included in Adams's note to Baron Tuyll had been ruthlessly cut out by the President, as tending to irritate his Imperial Majesty. From a statement of principle it had been turned, as Adams says, into "the tamest of all State papers."<sup>2</sup> The only consolation was that it entirely satisfied the Russian minister. But now another Russian manifesto was communicated, explaining more fully the views and intentions of the Holy Alliance, and couched in language which only an autocrat could employ.<sup>3</sup> This gave Adams his opening. If the Emperor set up to be the mouthpiece of Divine Providence, it would be well to intimate that this country did not recognize the language spoken, and had a destiny of its own, also under the guidance of Divine Providence. If Alexander could exploit his political principles, those of a brutal repressive policy, the United States could show that another system of government, remote and separate from European traditions and administration, could give rise to a new and more active political principle,—the consent of the governed, between which and the Emperor there could not exist even a sentimental sympathy. If the Holy Alliance could boast of its strength and agreement when engaged in stamping out all opposition to legitimacy, the United States, hearing the whisperings of a projected American

<sup>1</sup> The conference was held October 9th.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 201.

<sup>3</sup> This paper is printed *post*, p. 34.

union with itself at the head, an Alliance that did not arrogate to itself the epithet of Holy, could demand that the European concert justify its existence, its actions and its motives by records other than the bloody scenes at Naples, in France, and in Spain. Here was Adams's opportunity. It was no longer Canning who was to be answered; it was Europe, — and he seized it as only a masterful man, certain of his ground, can find in the very reasons of his opponent the best of support for his own position.

Yet Canning must be answered. The draft of Adams's note to Rush was amended by the President, and the Secretary prepared a substitute for those amendments.<sup>1</sup> This paper was as follows: —

#### ADAMS'S DRAFT.<sup>2</sup>

N. 76 RICHARD RUSH, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, U. S. London.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, 29 November, 1823.

SIR, — Your despatches numbered 323, 325, 326, 330, 331, 332, 334, and 336 have been received, containing the Reports of your Conferences, and copies of your confidential Correspondence with Mr Secretary Canning, in relation to certain proposals made by him tending to a concert of principles, with reference to the Affairs of South America, between the United States and Great Britain, and a combined and candid manifestation of them to the World.

The whole subject has [*been*] received the deliberate consideration of the President, under a deep impression of its general importance, a full conviction of the high interests and sacred principles involved in it, and an anxious solicitude for the cultivation of that harmony of opinions, and unity of object between the British and American Nations, upon which so much of the Peace, and Happiness, and Liberty of the world obviously depend.

I am directed to express to you the President's entire approbation of the course which you have pursued, in referring to your Govern-

<sup>1</sup> *James Monroe to John Quincy Adams.*

DEAR SIR, — I send you the sketch w<sup>h</sup> you left with me, of a letter to Mr Rush, with amendments, which are intended for your consideration. and which if you approve, I wish, when a copy is made, that we submit to a meeting of all the members of the adm<sup>n</sup>

If you see any objection to these amendments, we will confer on the subject.

The other sketches I will return as soon as I may be able.

J. M.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 20. 23.

— From the Adams MSS.

<sup>2</sup> What is enclosed in brackets of both Adams's and Monroe's papers was omitted in the final form of this despatch.



ment the proposals contained in Mr Canning's private and confidential Letter to you of 20 August. And I am now to signify to you the determination of the President concerning them. A determination which he wishes to be at once candid, explicit, and conciliatory, and which being formed, by referring each of the proposals to the single and unvarying Standard of Right and Wrong, as understood *by us* and maintained by us, will present to the British Government, the whole system of opinions and of purposes of the American Government, with regard to South America.

The first of the *principles* of the British Government, as set forth by Mr Canning is

1. We conceive the recovery of the Colonies by Spain to be hopeless. In this we concur.

The second is

2. We conceive the question of the Recognition of them as Independent States, to be one of time and circumstances.

We *did* so conceive it, until with a due regard to all the rights of Spain, and with a due sense of our responsibility to the judgment of mankind and of posterity, we had come to the conclusion that the recovery of them by Spain *was hopeless*. Having arrived at that conclusion, we considered that the People of those emancipated Colonies, were *of Right*, Independent of all other Nations, and that it was our duty so to acknowledge them. We did so acknowledge them in March 1822. From which Time, the recognition has no longer been a question *to us*. We are aware of considerations just and proper in themselves which might deter Great Britain from fixing upon the same *Time*, for this recognition, with us; but we wish to press it earnestly upon her consideration, whether, after having settled the point that the recovery of the Colonies by Spain was *hopeless*—and after maintaining at the Cannon's mouth, commercial Relations with them, incompatible with their Colonial Condition while subject to Spain, the *moral* obligation does not necessarily result of recognizing them as Independent States.

“3. We are however by no means disposed to throw any impediment in the way of an arrangement between them and the mother Country, by *amicable Negotiation*.”

Nor are we. Recognizing them as Independent States we acknowledge them as possessing full power, to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things, which Independent States may of right do. Among these an arrangement between them and Spain, by amicable negotiation is one, which far from being disposed to impede, we would earnestly desire, and by every proper means in our power endeavour to promote provided it should be founded on the basis of Independence.<sup>1</sup> But recognizing

<sup>1</sup> This phrase is taken from Monroe's amendments.

them as Independent States, we do and shall justly and [*provided their accommodation with Spain be founded on that basis*] necessarily claim in our relations with them political and commercial to be placed upon a footing of equal favour with the most favoured Nation.

“4. We aim not at the possession of any portion of them ourselves.”

“5. We could not see any portion of them transferred to any other Power, with indifference.”

In both these positions we fully concur — And we add

That we could not see with indifference any attempt [by one or more powers of Europe to dispose of the Freedom or Independence of those States, without their consent, or against their will.]

[To this principle, in our view of this subject all the rest are subordinate. Without this, our concurrence with Great-Britain upon all the rest would be useless.] It is upon this ground alone as we conceive that a firm and determined stand could now be jointly taken by Great Britain and the United States in behalf of the *Independence of Nations*, and never in the History of Mankind was there a period when a stand so taken and maintained, would exhibit to present and future ages a more glorious example of Power, animated by Justice and devoted to the ends of beneficence.

[With the addition of this principle, if assented to by the British Government, you are authorised to join in any act formal or informal, which shall manifest the concurrence of the two Governments on this momentous occasion. But you will explicitly state that without this basis of Right and moral obligation, we can see no foundation upon which the concurrent action of the two Governments can be harmonized. If the destinies of South America, are to be trucked and bartered between Spain and her European Allies, by amicable negotiation, or otherwise, without consulting the feelings or the rights of the People who inhabit that portion of our Hemisphere.]

[The ground of Resistance which we would oppose to any *interference* of the European Allies, between Spain and South America, is not founded on any partial interest of our own or of others. If the Colonies belonged to Spain we should object to any transfer of them to other Nations, which would materially affect our interests or rights, but with that exception we should consider Spain as possessing the common Power of disposing of her own Territories. Our present opposition to the disposal of any part of the American Continents by Spain, with her European allies, is that they do not belong to Spain, and can no more be disposed of by her, than by the United States.

With regard to the Islands of Cuba and Porto-Rico, to the Inhabitants of which the free Constitution of Spain, as accepted and sworn to by the King has been extended, we consider them as possessing the right of determining for themselves their course of conduct, under the



subversion of that Constitution, by foreign Military power. Our own interest and wish would be that they should continue in their political connection with Spain under the administration of a free Constitution, and in the enjoyment of their Liberties as now possessed; we could not see them transferred to any other Power, or subjected to the antient and exploded dominion of Spain, with indifference. We aim not at the possession of them ourselves.】

I am with great Respect, Sir, your very humble and obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>.

#### MONROE'S AMENDMENTS.

amendment proposed to first line, 3<sup>d</sup> pa :

【“provided their accomodation with Spain *was* be founded on that basis.”】

substitute the following after attempt in 6<sup>th</sup> line:

“any attempt by one or more powers of Europe, to restore those new States, to the crown of Spain, or to deprive them, in any manner whatever, of the freedom and independence which they have acquired, [*Much less could we behold with indifference the transfer of those new gov<sup>ts</sup>, or of any portion of the spanish possessions, to other powers, especially of the territories, bordering on, or nearest to the UStates.*”】

omit in next parg<sup>h</sup> the passage marked & substitute the following —

“with a view to this object, it is indispensable that the British gov<sup>t</sup>. take like ground, with that which is now held by the UStates, — that it recognize the independance of the new gov<sup>ts</sup>. — That measure being taken, we may then harmonize, in all the [*necessary*] arrangements and acts, which may be necessary for its accomplishment.” [*the object.*] It is upon this ground alone, &ca [to the end of the parg<sup>h</sup>.]

omit the residue & substitute something like the following —

【“We have no intention of acquiring any portion of the spanish possessions for ourselves, nor shall we ever do it by force. Cuba is that portion, the admission of which into our union, would be the most eligible, but it is the wish of this gov<sup>t</sup>., that it remain, at least for the present, attached to Spain. We have declared this sentiment publickly. & shall continue to act on it. It could not be admitted into our union, unless it should first declare its independance, & that independance should be acknowledged by Spain, events which may not occur for a great length of time, and which the UStates will rather discourage than promote.”】

On this basis, this gov<sup>t</sup> is willing to move in concert with G. Britain, for the purposes specified.

【with a view however to that object, it [*is submitted*] merits consideration, whether it will not [*be most advantageous to*] contribute most effectually, to its accomplishment, a perfect understanding being established between the two gov<sup>ts</sup>., that they act for the present, & until some

eminent danger should occur, separately, each making such representation to the allied powers, or to either of them as shall be deemed most advisable. Since the receipt of your letters, a communication has been made by Baron T. the Russian minister here, to the following effect. [then state his letter respecting minister &ca, & also the informal communication. State also the instructions given to M<sup>r</sup> Middleton, & the purport of those, which will be given to the minister at Paris.] On this subject, it will be proper for you to communicate freely with Mr Canning, as to ascertain fully the sentiments of his gov<sup>t</sup>. He will doubtless be explicit, as to the danger of any movement of the allied powers, or of any, or either of them, for the subjugation, or transfer of any portion of the territory in question, from Spain, to any other power. If there be no such danger, there will be no motive for such concert, and it is only on satisfactory proof of that danger, that you are authorized to provide for it.]

#### ADAMS'S SUBSTITUTE.

We believe however that for the most effectual [*object*] accomplishment of the object common to both Governments, a perfect understanding with regard to it being established between them, it will be most advisable that they should act separately each making such Representation to the Continental European Allies or either of them, as circumstances may render proper, and mutually communicating to each other the purport of such Representations, and all information respecting the measures and purposes of the Allies, the knowledge of which may enlighten the Councils of Great-Britain and of the United States, in this course of policy and towards the honourable end which will be common to them both. Should an emergency occur in which a *joint* manifestation of opinion by the two Governments, may tend to influence the Councils of the European Allies, either in the aspect of persuasion or of admonition, you will make it known to us without delay, and we shall according to the principles of our Government and in the forms prescribed by our Constitution, cheerfully join in any act, by which we may contribute to support the cause of human freedom and the Independence of the South American Nations.

On November 21st these papers were examined in Cabinet meeting. Canning had said that Great Britain would not throw any impediment in the way of an arrangement between the colonies and mother country, by amicable negotiation. He would not object to the colonies, under that method, granting to Spain commercial privileges greater than those given to other nations. This did not meet the wishes of Adams, who desired for the United States the footing of the most favored



nation. The President did not understand the full meaning of this wish, and proposed a modifying amendment, "which seemed to admit that we should not object to an arrangement by which special favors, or even a restoration of authority, might be conceded to Spain." This was to accept Canning's position to the full, and perhaps even went further, for the restoration of Spanish authority could hardly have occurred to a man who started from the belief that the recovery of the Colonies by Spain was hopeless. Both Calhoun and Adams strenuously objected. "The President ultimately acceded to the substance of the phrase as I had in the first instance made the draft; but finally required that the phraseology of it should be varied. Almost all the other amendments proposed by the President were opposed principally by Mr. Calhoun, who most explicitly preferred my last substituted paragraph to the President's projected amendment. The President did not insist upon any of his amendments which were not admitted by general consent, and the final paper, though considerably varied from my original draft, will be conformable to my own views."<sup>1</sup> A supplementary despatch intended for Rush is now printed for the first time.

No. 77. RICHARD RUSH: Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary U. S. London.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON 30 November, 1823.

SIR, — The Instructions contained in my Letter dated yesterday were given with a view to enable you to return an explicit answer to the proposals contained in Mr. Secretary Canning's confidential Letter to you of the 20<sup>th</sup> of August last. The object of this despatch is to communicate to you the views of the President with regard to a more general consideration of the affairs of South America; to serve for your government, and to be used according to your discretion, in any further intercourse which you may have with the British Cabinet on this subject.

In reviewing the proposals of Mr. Canning and the discussion of them in your Correspondence and Conferences, the President has with great satisfaction adverted to them, in the light of an *overture* from the British Government, towards a confidential concert of opinions and of operations between us and them, with reference to the countries heretofore subject to Spain in this Hemisphere. In the exposition of the *principles* of the British Government, as expressed in the five positions of Mr. Canning's Letter, we perceive nothing, with which we cannot

<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, VI. 193.

cheerfully concur with the exception of that which still considers the recognition of the Independence of the Southern Nations, as a question of Time and Circumstances. Confident as we are that the Time is at hand, when Great Britain, to preserve her own consistency must come to this acknowledgment, we are aware that she may perhaps be desirous of reserving to herself the *whole* merit of it with the South-Americans, and that she may finally yield more readily to the decisive act of recognition, when appearing to be spontaneous, than when urged upon her by *any* foreign suggestion. The point itself has been so earnestly pressed in your correspondence and conferences with Mr. Canning, and is so explicitly stated in my despatch of yesterday as *indispensable*, in our view towards a co-operation of the two Governments, upon this important interest, that the President does not think it necessary that you should dwell upon it with much solicitude. The objections exhibited by Mr. Canning against the measure as stated particularly in your despatches are so feeble, and your answers to them so conclusive, that after the distinct avowal of our sentiments, it may perhaps best conduce to the ultimate *entire* coincidence of purposes between the two Governments to leave the choice of *Time* for the recognition, which Mr. Canning has reserved to the exclusive consideration of the British Ministers themselves.

We receive the proposals themselves, and all that has hitherto passed concerning them, according to the request of Mr. Canning as *confidential*. As a first advance of that character, which has ever been made by the British Government, in relation to the *foreign* affairs between the two Nations, we would meet it with cordiality, and with the true spirit of confidence, which is candour. The observations of Mr. Canning in reply to your remark, that the policy of the United States has hitherto been, entirely distinct and separate from all interference in the complications of European Politics, have great weight, and the considerations involved in them, had already been subjects of much deliberation among ourselves. As a member of the European community Great Britain has relations with all the other Powers of Europe, which the United States have not, and with which it is their unaltered determination, not to interfere. But American Affairs, whether of the Northern or of the Southern Continent *can* henceforth not be excluded from the interference of the United States. All questions of policy relating to them have a bearing so direct upon the Rights and Interests of the United States themselves, that they cannot be left at the disposal of European Powers animated and directed exclusively by European principles and interests. Aware of the deep importance of united ends and councils, with those of Great Britain in this emergency, we see no possible basis on which that harmonious concert of measures can be founded, other than the general principle of South-American Independence. So long



as Great Britain withholds the recognition of that, we may, as we certainly do concur with her in the aversion to the transfer to any other power of any of the colonies in this Hemisphere, heretofore, or yet belonging to Spain; but the principles of that aversion, so far as they are common to both parties, resting only upon a casual coincidence of interests, in a National point of view *selfish* on both sides, would be liable to dissolution by every change of phase in the aspects of European Politics. So that Great Britain negotiating at once with the European Alliance, and *with us*, concerning America, without being bound by any permanent community of principle, [but only by a casual coincidence of interest with us,<sup>1</sup>] would still be free to accommodate her policy to any of those distributions of power, and partitions of Territory which have for the last half century been the ultima ratio of all European political arrangements. While we, bound to her by engagements, commensurate only with the momentary community of our separate particular interests, and self-excluded from all Negotiation with the European Alliance, should still be liable to see European Sovereigns dispose of American Interests, without consulting either with us, or with any of the American Nations, over whose destinies they would thus assume an arbitrary superintendence and controul.

It was stated to you by Mr. Canning that in the event of a proposal for a European Congress, to determine upon measures relating to South America, he should propose, that you, as the Representative of the United States, should be invited to attend at the same; and that in the case, either of a refusal to give you that invitation or of your declining to accept it if given, Great Britain would reserve to herself the right of declining also to attend. The President approves your determination not to attend, in case the invitation should be given; and we are not aware of any circumstances under which we should deem it expedient that a Minister of the United States should be authorized to attend at such a Congress if the invitation to that effect should be addressed to this Government itself. We should certainly decline attending unless the South-American Governments should also be invited to attend by *their* Representatives, and as the Representatives of Independent Nations. We would not sanction by our presence any meeting of European Potentates to dispose of American Republics. We shall if such meeting should take place, with a view to any result of hostile action solemnly protest against it, and against all the melancholy and calamitous consequences which may result from it. We earnestly hope that Great Britain will do the same.

It has been observed that through the whole course of the Correspondence and of the Conferences, between Mr. Canning and you, he

<sup>1</sup> The words enclosed have been struck out in pencil, as evidently a repetition of what had been already expressed.

did not disclose the specific information upon which he apprehended so immediate an interposition of the European Allies, in the affairs of South-America, as would have warranted or required the measure which he proposed to be taken in concert with you, before this Government could be advised of it. And this remark has drawn the more attention, upon observing the apparent coolness and apparent indifference, with which he treated the subject at your last conferences after the peculiar earnestness and solemnity of his first advances. It would have been more satisfactory here, and would have afforded more distinct light for deliberation, if the confidence in which his proposals originated had at once been entire. This suggestion is now made with a view to the future; and to manifest the disposition on our part to meet and return confidence without reserve.

The circumstances of Mr. Gallatin's private concerns having induced him to decline returning to Europe at this time, and the posture of Affairs requiring in the opinion of the President the immediate renewal of Negotiations with France, Mr. James Brown has been appointed to that Mission, and is expected very shortly to proceed upon it.

I am with great Respect &c.

[JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.]<sup>1</sup>

It was at the same cabinet meeting of November 21 that Adams outlined his intended reply to the later communications received from Baron Tuyl, a paper to be first communicated verbally and afterwards delivered to him confidentially. "My purpose would be in a moderate and conciliatory manner, but with a firm and determined spirit, to declare our dissent from the principles avowed in those communications; to assert those upon which our own Government is founded, and, while disclaiming all intention of attempting to propagate them by force, and all interference with the political affairs of Europe, to declare our expectation and hope that the European powers will equally abstain from the attempt to spread their principles in the American hemisphere, or to subjugate by force any part of these continents to their will."<sup>2</sup>

While the President approved this idea, his first draft of his message showed he had not comprehended the general drift of the Secretary's intentions in the conduct of the foreign relations of the United States. In calling the Cabinet meeting for the 21st he had included among the questions to be considered "whether any, & if any, what notice, shall be taken of Greece,

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 194.



& also of the invasion of Spain by France.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly his draft alluded to recent events in Spain and Portugal, “speaking in terms of the most pointed reprobation of the late invasion of Spain by France, and of the principles upon which it was undertaken by the open avowal of the King of France. It also contained a broad acknowledgment of the Greeks as an independent nation.”<sup>2</sup> Where was the future Monroe doctrine in all this? It was, as Adams said, a call to arms against all Europe, and for objects of policy exclusively European — Greece and Spain. Protest only led the President to promise to draw up two sketches for consideration, conformable to the two different aspects of the subject. Nothing could better prove how the essential part of Adams’s views had escaped Monroe’s attention. On the next day the Secretary again urged Monroe to abstain from everything in his message which the Holy Alliance could make a pretext for construing into aggression upon them. He should end his administration — “hereafter to be looked back to as the golden age of this republic” — in peace. If the Holy Alliance were determined to make up an issue with the United States, “it was our policy to meet it, and not to make it. . . . If they intend now to interpose by force, we shall have as much as we can do to prevent them, without going to bid them defiance in the heart of Europe.”<sup>3</sup> And Adams again stated the heart of his desired policy in unmistakable words: “The ground that I wish to take is that of earnest remonstrance against the interference of the European powers by force with South America, but to disclaim all interference on our part with Europe; to make an American cause and adhere inflexibly to that.” In Gallatin Adams found a congenial spirit on every point save that of the Greeks; and Gallatin talked with Monroe. The result of the

<sup>1</sup> *James Monroe to John Quincy Adams.*

DEAR SIR, — I have given notice to the other members of the adm<sup>y</sup>, who are present, to meet here at one o clock, at which time you will bring over the draught of the instruction to Mr. Rush for consideration. I mean to bring under consideration, at the same time, the important question, whether any, & if any, what notice, shall be taken of Greece, & also of the invasion of Spain by France. With a view to the latter object, be so good as to bring over with you, a copy of the King’s Speech, to the legislative corps, announcing the intended invasion.

J. M.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 21. 1823.

— Adams MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 197.

urgency of these two men was that the President modified his paragraphs on foreign affairs, and made them conformable to the spirit of Adams's position.

The evidence given in these pages all tends to show that it was Adams alone who gave tone to the discussions in Cabinet on the Canning propositions, and it was due to his efforts that the question passed from that of a combination, more or less defined, with Great Britain for her own interested views and aims, to that of a general and independent policy, distinctly American, and broad enough to bear the heavy burdens laid upon it since. It is not likely that the manuscript of Monroe's message of 1823 is in existence; nor is it likely that it would show the paragraphs announcing the Monroe doctrine to be in Adams's writing. Yet it was certainly Adams and not Monroe who spoke in those paragraphs.

I have stated there is no entry in the diary of John Quincy Adams from September 11 to November 7, 1823. From the Adams manuscripts I take a paper prepared by the Secretary of State for submission to the President, giving an account of his conversations with Baron Tuvll, the Minister of Russia in the United States. This paper is of special value because it supplies what the Diary does not give,—the preliminary stages of the intercourse. The various papers mentioned in this account are also given, because they are essential to a complete understanding of the scope of Adams's reply.

#### ADAMS'S ACCOUNT OF HIS COMMUNICATIONS WITH BARON TUYLL.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1823. the Baron de Tuvll, the Russian Minister, at an interview with me at the Office of the Department of State informed me that the Emperor of Russia having learnt that General Devereux had been appointed as a Minister Plenipotentiary from the Government of the Republic of Colombia to reside at his Court, had determined not to receive him in that capacity: nor to receive any agent from any of the Governments recently formed in the new world — and that he, Baron Tuvll was instructed to make this determination of his Imperial Majesty known, so that there might no doubt be entertained in that respect with regard to his intentions. That he had not been instructed to make an official communication of this fact to the American Government; but that, as he considered such a communication the most effectual means of making it known to them, and thereby of fulfilling the intentions of his sovereign as indicated in his instructions he should address to me an official Note to that effect.



The Baron added that by two several Instructions of prior dates, in June and December 1822, he had been informed of the satisfaction with which the Emperor had observed that the Government of the United States, when recognizing the Independence of the South American States, had declared that it was not their intention to deviate from the neutrality which they had until then observd, in the contests between Spain and her American Colonies; and that it was the wish and hope of the Emperor, that the United States should persevere in that course of neutrality. The Baron added that he had not thought it necessary to communicate officially the purport of these Instructions, and that he should not refer to them in the Note which he now proposed to transmit to the Department of State; but having concluded to give in the form of a Note the information of the Emperor's determination with regard to the Mission of General Devereux, he had thought the occasion a proper one for making a verbal communication of the purport of his prior Instructions.

I observed to the Baron de Tuijll, that upon the President's return from Virginia, which was expected in a very few days, I would lay before him, as well the Note, which I should in the meantime receive from the Baron, as the purport of the oral communication which he then made to me. That I should probably be instructed to return a written answer to his Note, and that I should also be directed what to say in answer to his verbal remarks. That the Declaration of the American Government when they recognized the Southern American Nations, that they would persevere in the neutrality till then observed between Spain and her emancipated Colonies, had been made under the observance of a like neutrality by all the European Powers to the same contest. That so long as that state of things should continue, I could take upon me to assure the Baron, that the United States would not depart from the neutrality so declared by them. But that if one or more of the European powers should depart from their neutrality, that change of circumstances would necessarily become a subject of further deliberation in this Government, the result of which it was not in my power to foretell.

On the same day I received from the Baron de Tuijll the Note, copy of which marked 1 is herewith enclosed.<sup>1</sup>

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of October, the Baron again called at the Office of the Department of State, and read to me the draught of a despatch that he had prepared giving an account to his Government of the purport of the conference between us of the 16<sup>th</sup>. He said that being desirous of making the statement with perfect accuracy, he submitted this draught to me, with a view to making any alteration in it, which I might think that, to the accomplishment of that object, it would require. I ob-

<sup>1</sup> Printed on page 32, *post*.

served that it appeared to me to be quite correct, with the exception, that in the statement of the final remarks that I had made to him, he had so concentrated the substance of it, as to give to it a tone of dryness in the manner, which had not been intended by me. That he was aware the conversation between us had been in manner altogether friendly and confidential, and that after saying to him that I should report to the President the purport of his communication to me, and answer it according to the directions that I should receive from him, I had added that I could at once take it upon myself to assure him, that while the European Powers should continue to observe their neutrality between Spain and South America, the United States would not depart from theirs. But that a change of the State of the question, by foreign and European interposition, would necessarily give rise to deliberation here, the result of which he must perceive it was not for me to foretell. The relations between the United States and Russia had always been of the most friendly character, and I knew it was the earnest wish of the President that they should so continue. The Personal Relations in which I had stood for several years with the Russian Government, and the proof of Friendship which during that period the Emperor Alexander had repeatedly given to the United States, had left on my mind, an indelible impression of respect for his character. I should regret the possible inference that might be drawn by the Imperial Government, from the compressed substance of what I had said to him, that it had been in terms as short and dry, as it appeared in his report. He said that he immediately saw the force of my remark, and would alter his despatch accordingly.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of October he came again to the office, and read to me the amended draft of his despatch, to the general correctness of which I assented. He afterwards, as will appear furnished me with a copy of it, as sent to his Court, dated  $\frac{1}{2}$  4 October 1823.

At this conference of the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, the Baron intimated to me a wish, that the substance of his Note of the  $\frac{1}{16}$  October, might be published, in the form of an Editorial Article, in the National Intelligencer, or that an article which he should prepare, stating the fact that such communication had been made by him to this Government, might be inserted by his direction, not as official, but yet as from an authentic source. He said that his motive for this wish, was to discharge faithfully his duty to his Government, which had enjoined him not to suffer any doubt to be entertained with regard to the Emperor's intentions, on the subject to which it relates.

I observed that as to an Editorial paragraph apparently authoritative, stating the fact of his written communication, it would doubtless excite much attention, and lead to the enquiry what answer had been given to it. That I should send him an answer, which I supposed would be of a



nature, not to require a reply, and that the correspondence on that subject would terminate with it. That after he should receive the answer, if he still desired that the whole transaction should be made public, I did not apprehend there would be any objection on our part to make it so, either in the form of a newspaper paragraph, or by the publication of the two Notes. But perhaps the most suitable manner would be that they should be communicated, with the documents accompanying the President's Message to Congress at their approaching Session.

That with regard to a publication by *his* direction, I had to remark; that from the perfect freedom of the Press in this Country foreign Ministers, if they chose to avail themselves of it, possessed the means of operating upon the public mind, in a manner not accessible to them in countries where the Press was under the controul of the Government. Foreign Ministers in the United States had often so availed themselves of it; but never with any success; and always with a result of disservice rather than of service to their own Government. We considered it as an improper expedient for them to resort to. And that as between Nation and Nation, no foreign Minister in the United States, could with propriety insert in the public prints, any thing that an American Minister in his Country would by the existing state of the Press be debarr'd from publishing there.

That in the present case if he should publish a statement of the communication made by him, it would immediately excite the enquiry what answer had been returned to it by this Government. An enquiry which upon the Meeting of Congress could not fail to present itself in the form of a Resolution in one or the other House, calling upon the Executive for information concerning it, and the natural answer to which would be the communication of the two Notes. But in the meantime, the first publication from him would give rise to animadversions in the public Prints, and perhaps in Congress, which might be unacceptable both to him and to his Government, and the character of which would readily occur to his own Reflections.

He said he believed the best mode of giving the publicity to the whole subject, which might be necessary to give effect to the views of his Government, would be by the communication of the papers to Congress, as I had proposed. But if it was agreeable to me, he would wait to receive my answer, and would then request another interview with me, at which he would candidly state to me his definitive wishes, with regard to the publication.

Upon the President's return from Virginia, on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, I laid before him the Note of 16 October received from Baron Tuyll, and reported to him the substance of the Conferences between the Baron and me as here related. After a consultation with the Members of the Administration then in Washington, I was directed by

the President to request another interview with the Baron; which accordingly took place on the 8<sup>th</sup>

I then told him that I had submitted to the President the Note from him declaring the Emperor's determination not to receive any Minister or Agent from any of the South American States, to which I should shortly send him an answer: that I had also reported to the President the substance of our verbal conferences: of what had been said by him, and of my answers. That the President had directed me to say that he approved of my answers as far as they had gone, and to add that he received the observations of the Russian Government relating to the neutrality of the United States in the contest between Spain, and the Independent States of South America, amicably; and in return for them wished him to express to the Court *the hope of the Government of the United States that Russia would on her part also continue to observe the same neutrality.* After some conversation the Baron desired me to repeat what I had said, that he might be sure of perfectly understanding me: which I did. He then observed that he should immediately prepare a dispatch to his Government, relating to the purport of this conversation, and (it being Saturday) that to be sure of its accuracy he would send it to my house the next day, requesting me to make any observations upon it that I should think advisable.

At this conference, upon a suggestion from the President, I enquired of the Baron, what was the import of the words "political principles," in his note of 1<sup>st</sup> October. He said they were used in the Instructions of his Government to him, and he understood them as having reference to the right of Supremacy of Spain over her Colonies; and that this appeared to him to be so clearly their meaning that he did not think it would be necessary for him to ask of his Government an explanation of them. The Baron reminded me of my observation at a former meeting that my answer to his Note, would probably not be of a nature to require a reply: and of my engagement to refer it for further advisement, whether and how the correspondence should be published. I told him I remembered both, and still believed that my answer to his note, would require no reply, but that of that he would himself judge. And I stated to him what I supposed would be the substance of my answer; upon which he made no remark.<sup>1</sup>

The next day, 9. November, he sent to my house the draft of his despatch, which, after perusing it I returned to him with a private and

<sup>1</sup> "An acknowledgment of the receipt of his note; a statement that we had received and sent Ministers and Agents in our intercourse with the independent South American States, and should continue to do the same; regretting that the Emperor's political principles had not yet led his Government to the same conclusion. I saw by the Baron's countenance that he was not a little affected at this statement. He took leave of me, however, in perfect good humor." *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 182.



confidential note, containing two observations relating to it. The first that in reporting *my* part of the preceeding day's conversation he had used the expressions of contest between Spain *and her Colonies*, while I had then and in all our conferences spoken of them as the Independent American States, heretofore Spanish Colonies, and I suggested to him the propriety of making the report of what was said by me conformable to this fact. The second, that as the despatch concluded by stating to his Court, that before making it up he had for the sake of accuracy, submitted it to my inspection, as he had also done with regard to the prior despatch of  $\frac{1}{2}\frac{5}{7}$  October, I thought it necessary, with a view to the certainty of equal accuracy in my reports to the President of the contents of his despatches, to request copies of them both. The next day he sent me confidentially copies of both — the latter of them dated <sup>30 October</sup><sub>11 November</sub> 1823, and amended conformably to the suggestion in my confidential note to him of the preceding day. Copies of these papers marked 2 and 3 are annexed.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of November, the answer, copy of which is marked N. 4. was sent to the Baron. On the 17<sup>th</sup> the Baron requested another interview with me, in consequences of fresh despatches received from his Government. I received him on the same day; when he read to me a Letter to him from Count Nesselrode, dated about the last of August, informing him of the intended departure of the Emperor Alexander from St Petersburg, on a tour of inspection of his armies, which would probably occupy about three months; with assurances that no movement of hostility was contemplated in connection with this Journey, but that the preservation of general Peace, was still the object of the Emperor's earnest solicitude.

The Baron communicated to me at the same time, extracts from two other despatches received from his Court — one dated 30 August N. S. containing an exposition of the views of the Emperor Alexander and of his Allies, Austria, Prussia and France in relation to the Affairs of Spain and Portugal — and the other dated 1 September N. S. replying to despatches received from the Baron, after his first arrival here, and relating particularly to the Negotiation, concerning the Northwest Coast of America, and the Imperial Ukaze of the  $\frac{1}{2}\frac{4}{8}$  September 1821. He left these extracts with me, to be submitted in confidence to the President, and with permission to take a copy of that of the 30<sup>th</sup> of August. He declared his entire satisfaction with my answer to his note of  $\frac{1}{4}\frac{8}{8}$  October.<sup>1</sup>

[Here follows an account of the conference with Baron Tuyll, of November 27th, as given in the Memoirs, vol. vi. pp. 212-214.]

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

## BARON TUYLL TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

MONSIEUR, — L'Empereur, mon Auguste Maitre, ayant été informé, que la Régence Républicaine de Colombia avait nommé des Agens diplomatiques auprès de différentes Cours Européennes et que le Général de division d'Evreux avait reçu une destination semblable pour St. Petersbourg, sa Majesté Imperiale a enjoint à son Ministère de me prévenir, que, fidele aux principes politiques, qu'Elle suit de concert avec ses alliés, Elle ne pourra dans aucun cas recevoir auprès d'Elle aucun agent quelconque, soit de la Regence de Colombia, soit d'aucun des autres Gouvernemens de fait, qui doivent leur existence aux évènements, dont le nouveau monde a été depuis quelques années le theatre.

Comme il m'est prescrit de ne pas laisser subsister le moindre doute sur les intentions de sa Majesté Impériale à cet égard, j'ai jugé, Monsieur, devoir porter cette determination à votre connaissance et je saisis cette occasion pour vous réitérer l'assurance de la haute considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être, Monsieur, votre tres humble et tres obeissant serviteur

TUYLL.

WASHINGTON, le  $\frac{1}{16}$  Octobre, 1823.<sup>1</sup>

## BARON TUYLL TO COUNT NESSELRODE.

À S. E. MR. LE COMTE DE NESSELRODE

WASHINGTON le  $\frac{1}{2}$  octobre 1823

M<sup>r</sup> LE COMTE, — Pour remplir les ordres que V. Ex. m'a fait l'honneur de me transmettre par sa dépêche en date du 14 Juin dernier, j'ai adressé le  $\frac{1}{16}$  octobre à M<sup>r</sup> le Secrétaire d'Etat Adams la lettre ci annexée en copie.

Ayant jugé, M<sup>r</sup> le Comte, que cette demarche officielle demandait un developpement plus étendu des principes et de la façon de voir de notre Cour, concernant la question des Colonies Espagnoles d'Amérique, je me rendis ce même jour au Departement des affaires étrangères et je prévins M<sup>r</sup> le Secrétaire d'Etat du Contenu de l'office, qu'il allait recevoir de ma part. Je passai ensuite à m'expliquer envers ce ministre relativement à l'objet ci dessus mentionné dans un sens entièrement conforme aux dépêches de V. Ex. du  $\frac{1}{2}$  Juillet et du  $\frac{1}{4}$  Decembre 1822, et je finis par exprimer au nom de S. M. l'Empereur, notre Auguste Maitre, le vœu et l'espoir, que le Gouvernement des Etats Unis persistera dans le système de neutralité entre l'Espagne et les Colonies Espagnoles d'Amérique, qu'il annonça vouloir suivre à l'époque, ou il reconnût l'indépendance et l'existence politique de ces derniers pays.

Mr Adams me répondit : qu'il pouvait m'assurer, qu'aussi longtems

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.



que les affaires continueront de rester sous ce rapport dans le même état, où elles se trouvaient au moment, que le Gouvernement Américain a adopté le système de cette neutralité, et où elles se sont maintenues jusqu'à présent le Gouvernement ne se départira point de ce système. Mr. le Secrétaire d'Etat ajouta ensuite les observations suivantes :

Que la resolution du Gouvernement des Etats Unis d'observer la neutralité entre l'Espagne et ses Colonies Américaines, ayant été prise d'après un état de choses existant, celui de la neutralité de la part des Puissances de l'Europe dans la guerre, que se font l'Espagne et ses Colonies, tant que cet état de choses continuera de subsister, ce pays ci n'apportera point d'altération au système de neutralité, qu'il a embrassé. Que si cette situation venait à éprouver un changement de la part de l'une ou de l'autre Puissance Européenne, de cette nouvelle situation résulterait pour le cabinet de Washington la nécessité de délibérations nouvelles ; et qu'il ne saurait, naturellement, pas me dire, quelles pourraient être les determinations que dans une semblable hypothèse, le Gouvernement des Etats Unis se verrait dans le cas d'adopter.

J'ai remarqué avec satisfaction, Mr. le Comte, que Mr. le Secrétaire d'Etat a paru reconnoître dans les explications, que j'ai pensé devoir lui offrir, une nouvelle preuve des vues droites, généreuses et pleines de modération, qui caractérisent la politique de l'Empereur et un témoignage de plus des dispositions constamment amicales de Sa Majesté Impériale envers le Gouvernement des Etats Unis. Je me suis confirmé à cette occasion dans l'idée, que j'avais déjà antérieurement conçue, du prix, que le Gouvernement de ce pays attache à ces dispositions de notre Auguste Souverain, et de son désir d'y correspondre de son coté sincèrement ; sentimens, dont Mr Adams m'a réitéré les assurances les plus positives.

J'ai l'honneur d'être &c &c.<sup>1</sup>

[TUYLL.]

#### BARON TUYLL TO COUNT NESSELRODE.

À S. E. MR. LE COMTE DE NESSELRODE.

WASHINGTON, le <sup>30 Octobre</sup><sub>11 Novembre</sub> 1823.

MR. LE COMTE, — Mr. le Secrétaire d'Etat Adams m'ayant invité de me rendre le <sup>27 Octobre</sup><sub>8 Novembre</sub> au Departement des affaires étrangères, ce ministre me donna à connaître, qu'il avait mis la lettre officielle, que je lui adressai le 1<sup>er</sup> Octobre et sur laquelle je recevrai incessamment une réponse par écrit, sous les yeux de Mr. le Président des Etats Unis et qu'il lui avait également rendu compte tant des explications verbales, dans lesquelles j'étois entré à cette occasion, concernant la neutralité de

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

ce pays entre l'Espagne et ses Colonies Américaines, que de ce qu'il m'avait répondu, de même verbalement, à ce sujet.

Mr. Adams me dit ensuite que Mr. le Président avait pleinement approuvé cette réponse de Mr. le Secrétaire d'Etat, qu'il l'avait de plus chargé de m'assurer que les observations, qu'au nom de S. M. l'Empereur j'avais présentées au Gouvernement des Etats Unis relativement au point susmentionné, avaient été reçues amicalement par Mr. le Président et que ce dernier désirait, qu'en portant cette assurance à la connaissance de ma Cour, j'y ajoutasse simultanément l'expression de vœu, que forme de son côté le Président des Etats Unis : "que Sa Majesté Impériale put trouver bon de continuer de même à suivre le système de neutralité, qu'Elle a jusqu'à présent observé dans les différences, qui subsistent entre l'Espagne et les Etats indépendans, ci devant Colonies d'Espagne en Amérique."

J'ai pensé devoir prier Mr. Adams de prendre lecture de mon rapport en date du  $\frac{1}{2}$  Octobre, que ce ministre a reconnu rendre fidèlement le sens de ce qui s'est passé dans nos premières conférences, et j'ai encore adopté aujourd'hui la même marche, afin de m'assurer d'autant mieux de l'exactitude de la présente dépêche.

J'ai l'honneur d'être &c., &c.,<sup>1</sup>

[TUYLL.]

#### COUNT NESSELRODE TO BARON TUYLL.

Extrait.

St. PETERSBOURG le 30. Août, 1823.

Quand les principes qu'une cour a résolu de suivre, sont établis avec précision ; quand le but qu'elle se propose est clairement indiqué, les événements deviennent faciles à juger pour Ses Ministres & Agents diplomatiques. Ceux de l'Empereur n'avaient donc pas besoin d'instructions nouvelles pour apprécier & considerer sous leur vrai point de vue les heureux changements qui viennent de s'accomplir dans la Péninsule.

Pénétrés de l'esprit qui dirige la politique de Sa Majesté Impériale, ils auront applaudi aux déclarations, dont ces changements ont été précédés, exprimé les vœux les plus sincères en faveur d'une entreprise qui embrasse de si hauts intérêts & annoncé sans hésitation que l'Empereur & ses alliés voyaient avec un véritable sentiment de joie, la marche des troupes de S. M. T. C. couronnée d'un double succès par le concours des peuples auxquels l'armée française a offert une généreuse assistance & par l'affranchissement des païs où la révolution était parvenue à détrôner l'autorité légitime.

Aujourd'hui que les artisans des malheurs de l'Espagne, renfermés dans Cadix & dans Barcelone, peuvent bien encore abreuver de nou-

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.



veaux outrages leurs prisonniers augustes, mais non asservir & tyranniser leur patrie; aujourd'hui que le Portugal a noblement secoué le joug d'une odieuse faction, nous sommes arrivés à une époque, où il ne sera point inutile de vous informer des décisions & des vues ultérieures de Sa Majesté Impériale.

La force des armes déployée à propos; environnée de toutes les garanties que réclamait la résolution d'y avoir recours; tempérée par toutes les mesures & toutes les promesses qui pouvaient tranquilliser le peuple sur leur avenir; soutenue, enfin, par cette puissance d'union & d'accord qui a créé de nos jours un nouveau système politique: la force des armes n'a eu en quelque sorte qu'à se laisser appercevoir pour démasquer aux yeux du monde un despotisme qu'avaient trop souvent révoqué en doute, ou l'erreur des hommes à théories qui s'abusaient involontairement peut-être sur le véritable état des choses, ou la mauvaise foi des hommes à projets criminels qui ne cherchaient que les moyens d'étendre & de propager la contagion des mêmes malheurs.

En Espagne, la nation toute entière attendait impatiemment l'occasion de prouver que la plus coupable imposture avait seule pu lui prêter ces vœux subversifs de l'ordre social & ce désir d'avilir la Religion & le Trône que démentait d'avance chaque page de son histoire. En Portugal, il a suffi d'un exemple & du courage d'un jeune Prince, pour que l'édifice révolutionnaire tombât au premier choc, & pour ainsi dire, de sa propre faiblesse. C'est une grande & consolante leçon que la Providence Divine nous réservait. Elle accorde la justification d'un éclatant triomphe aux desseins des Monarques qui ont pris l'engagement de marcher dans ses voies; mais peut-être n'a-t-on pas assez observé que les mémorables événements, dont nous sommes témoins, marquent une nouvelle phase de la civilisation Européenne. Sans s'affaiblir, le patriotisme paraît s'être éclairé; la raison des peuples a fait un grand pas, en reconnoissant que, dans le système actuel de l'Europe, les conquêtes sont impossibles; que les Souverains qui avait mis leur gloire à réparer les effets de ces anciennes interventions dont la malveillance essayait encore d'allarmer la crédulité publique, ne renouveleraient point ce qu'ils avaient toujours condamné, & que ces vieilles haines nationales qui repoussaient jusqu'aux services rendus par une main étrangère, devaient disparaître devant un sentiment universel, devant le besoin d'opposer une digue impénétrable au retour des troubles & des révolutions dont nous avons tous été, trente ans, les jouets et les victimes. Que l'on compare l'Espagne telle que nous la peignaient des prédictions sinistres, à l'Espagne telle qu'elle se montre aujourd'hui; que l'on suive les rapides progrès de la bonne cause, depuis l'année dernière, & on se convaincra de ces utiles vérités, on verra que la paix, en se rétablissant, aura pour base la conviction généralement acquise des précieux avantages d'une politique qui a délivré la France,

en 1814 et 1815, volé au secours de l'Italie en 1821, brisé les chaînes de l'Espagne & du Portugal en 1823; d'une politique, qui n'a pour objet que de garantir la tranquillité de tous les Etats dont se compose le monde civilisé.

Il importe que les Ministres & Agents de l'Empereur ne perdent pas de vue ces graves considérations & qu'ils les développent toutes les fois qu'ils trouvent l'occasion de les faire apprécier.

L'Alliance a été trop calomniée & elle a fait trop de bien pour qu'on ne doive pas confondre ses accusateurs, en plaçant les résultats à coté des imputations, & l'honneur d'avoir affranchi & sauvé les peuples, à coté du reproche de vouloir les asservir & les perdre.

Tout autorise à croire que cette salutaire Alliance accomplira sans obstacle sérieux l'œuvre dont elle s'occupe. La Revolution expirante peut bien compter quelques jours de plus ou de moins d'agonie, mais il lui sera plus difficile que jamais de redevenir Puissance; car les Monarques Alliés sont décidés à ne pas transiger, à ne pas même traiter avec elle. Certes, ils ne conseilleront, en Espagne, ni les vengeances ni les réactions; & leur premier principe sera constamment, que l'innocence obtienne une juste garantie & l'erreur un noble pardon; mais ils ne sauraient reconnaître ancien droit créé & soutenu par le crime; ils ne sauraient practiser avec ceux qu'on a vus renouveler à l'isle de Leon, à Madrid & à Séville des attentats qui prouvent le mépris ouvert de tout ce que les hommes devraient respecter le plus dans l'intérêt de leur repos & de leur bonheur. C'est avec cette détermination qu'a été formé & que sera poursuivi le siège de Cadix. On ne posera les armes qu'au moment où la liberté du roi aura enfin été conquise & assurée.

Ce moment sera celui, où les Alliés rempliront envers l'Espagne le reste de leurs engagements & de leurs devoirs. Ils se garderont de porter la plus légère atteinte à l'indépendance du Roi, sous le rapport de l'administration intérieure de ses Etats, mais par l'organe de leurs Ambassadeurs (Sa Majesté Impériale se propose alors d'accréditer temporairement le Lieutenant Général Pozzo di Borgo auprès de S. M. C.) ils élèveront la voix de l'amitié, ils useront de ses privilèges, ils profiteront de leur position, pour insister avec énergie sur la nécessité d'empêcher que l'avenir ne reproduise les erreurs du passé, de confier à des Institutions fortes, monarchique & toutes nationales les destinées futures de l'Espagne & de rendre désormais inutile l'assistance qu'elle a reçue, on y fondant un gouvernement dont la surêté résidera dans le bien même dont il sera l'instrument & l'auteur.

Les Alliés ne pourront signaler ni les loix, ni les mesures, ni les hommes les plus capable de réaliser de telles intentions. Mais ils croiraient manquer à une de leurs obligations les plus essentielles, s'ils n'avertissaient Ferdinand VII., redevenue libre, que leur entreprise demande encore une dernière apologie aux yeux de l'Europe, & que si



la prospérité de l'Espagne n'en est la conséquence immédiate, ils n'auront rien fait ni pour lui, ni pour eux.

L'Empereur souhaite avec la même sincérité & le même désintéressement un bonheur durable à la Nation portugaise. Nos communications jointes à celles des Cours d'Autriche, de France et de Prusse qui partagent ce désir, en offriront la meilleure preuve au Cabinet de Lisbonne, & nous n'aurons plus de vœux à former, si le nouveau gouvernement du Portugal prépare avec prudence & maturité les matériaux d'une restauration solide, s'il les met en œuvre, quand l'Espagne pourra se livrer aux mêmes soins, & s'il rivalise de zèle avec le Cabinet de Madrid pour décider, à l'avantage réciproque des deux Etats, les questions de politique extérieure & administrative, qu'ils ont, l'un à l'autre, à méditer & à résoudre.

Tel est le sens dans lequel ont agi & dans lequel continueront d'agir l'Empereur & ses Alliés. . . .

Vous êtes autorisé à faire usage de la présente dans vos rapports confidentiels avec le gouvernement des Etats-Unis d'Amérique.<sup>1</sup>

On November 25, Adams "made a draft of observations upon the communications recently received from the Baron de Tuyl, the Russian Minister. Took the paper, together with the statement I had prepared of what has passed between him and me, and all the papers received from him to the President."<sup>2</sup> The paper is as follows:—

OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMMUNICATIONS RECENTLY RECEIVED  
FROM THE MINISTER OF RUSSIA.<sup>3</sup>

The Government of the United States of America is [essentially] *Republican*. By their Constitution it is provided that "The United States shall guaranty to every State in this Union, a *Republican* form of Government, and shall protect each of them from invasion."

【The principles of this form of Polity are; 1 that the Institution

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

"The second extract was an exposition of principles relating to the affairs of Spain and Portugal, in a tone of passionate exultation at the counter-revolution in Portugal and the impending success of the French army in Spain; an 'Io Triumphe' over the fallen cause of revolution, with sturdy promises of determination to keep it down; disclaimers of all intention of making conquests; bitter complaints of being calumniated, and one paragraph of compunctions, acknowledging that an apology is yet due to mankind for the invasion of Spain, which it is in the power only of Ferdinand to furnish, by making his people happy. That paragraph is a satire upon the rest of the paper." *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 190.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*, VI. 199.

<sup>3</sup> What is enclosed between brackets was struck out of the paper.

of Government, to be lawful, must be pacific, that is founded upon the consent, and by the agreement of those who are governed; and 2 that each Nation is exclusively the judge of the Government best suited to itself, and that no other Nation, can justly interfere by force to impose a different Government upon it. The first of these principles may be designated, as the principle of *Liberty* — the second as the principle of *National Independence* — They are both Principles of *Peace* and of *Good Will to Men.*]

[A necessary consequence of the second of these principles is that] The United States recognize in other Nations the right which they claim and exercise for themselves, of establishing and of modifying their own Governments, according to their own judgments, and views of their interests, not encroaching upon the rights of others.

Aware that the Monarchical principle of Government, is different from theirs, the United States have never sought a conflict with it, for interests not their own. Warranted by the principle of *National Independence*, which forms one of the bases of their political Institutions, they have desired *Peace*, *Commerce* and *Honest Friendship* with all other Nations, and entangling alliances with none.

From all the combinations of European Politics relative to the distribution of Power, or the Administration of Government the United States have studiously kept themselves aloof. They have not sought, by the propagation of their principles to disturb the *Peace*, or to intermeddle with the policy of any part of Europe. In the *Independence of Nations*, they have respected the organization of their Governments, however different from their own, and [Republican to the last drop of blood in their veins,] they have thought it no sacrifice of their principles to cultivate with sincerity and assiduity *Peace* and *Friendship* even with the most absolute Monarchies and their Sovereigns.

To the Revolution and War which has severed the immense Territories, on the american [*Territories*] continents heretofore subject to the dominion of Spain from the yoke of that power, the United States have observed an undeviating neutrality. So long as the remotest prospect existed that Spain by Negotiation or by arms could recover the possession she had once held of those Countries, the United States forbore to enquire by what title she had held them, and how she had fulfilled towards them the duties of all Governments to the People under their charge. When the South-American Nations, after successively declaring their *Independence*, had maintained it, until no rational doubt could remain, that the dominion of Spain over them was irrecoverably lost, the United States recognized them as Independent Nations, and have entered into those relations with them commercial and political incident to that Condition — Relations the more important to the interests of the United States, as the whole of those emancipated



Regions are situated in their own Hemisphere, and as the most extensive, populous and powerful of the new Nations are in their immediate vicinity; and one of them bordering upon the Territories of this Union.

To the contest between Spain and South America all the European Powers have also remained neutral. The maritime Nations have freely entered into commercial intercourse with the South-Americans, which they could not have done, while the Colonial Government of Spain existed. The neutrality of Europe was one of the foundations upon which the United States formed their judgment, in recognizing the South-American Independence; they considered and still consider, that from this neutrality the European Nations cannot rightfully depart.

Among the Powers of Europe, Russia is one with whom the United States have entertained the most friendly and mutually beneficial intercourse. Through all the vicissitudes of War and Revolution, of which the world for the last thirty years has been the theatre, the good understanding between the two Governments has been uninterrupted. The Emperor Alexander in particular has not ceased to manifest sentiments of Friendship and good-will to the United States from the period of his accession to the throne, to this moment, and the United States on their part, have as invariably shown the interest which they take in his Friendship and the solicitude with which they wish to retain it.

In the communications recently received from the Baron de Tuyll, so far as they relate to the immediate objects of intercourse between the two Governments, the President sees with high satisfaction, the avowal of unabated cordiality and kindness towards the United States on the part of the Emperor.

With regard to the communications which relate to the Affairs of Spain and Portugal, and to those of South America, while sensible of the candour and frankness with which they are made, the President indulges the hope, that they are not intended *either* to mark an *Æra* either of change, in the friendly dispositions of the Emperor towards the United States or of hostility to the principles upon which their Governments are founded; or of deviation from the system of neutrality hitherto observed by him and his allies, in the contest between Spain and America.

To the Notification that the Emperor, in conformity with the *political principles* maintained by himself and his Allies, has determined to receive no Agent from any of the Governments *de facto*, which have been recently formed in the new World it has been thought sufficient to answer that the United States, faithful to *their* political principles, have recognised and now consider them as the Governments of Independent Nations.

To the signification of the Emperor's hope and desire that the United States should continue to observe the neutrality which they have pro-

claimed between Spain and South-America, the answer has been that the Neutrality of the United States will be maintained, as long as that of Europe, apart from Spain, shall continue and that they hope that of the Imperial Government of Russia will be continued.

[To the confidential communication from the Baron de Tuyll, of the Extract, dated St Petersburg 30 August 1823. So far as it relates to the affairs of Spain and Portugal, the only remark which it is thought necessary to make, is of the great satisfaction with which the President has noticed *that* paragraph, which contains the frank and solemn admissions that "*the undertaking of the Allies, yet demands a last Apology to the eyes of Europe.*"]

In the general declarations that the allied Monarchs will never compound, and never will even treat with the *Revolution* and that their policy has only for its object by *forcible* interposition to guaranty the tranquility of *all the States of which the civilised world is composed*, the President wishes to perceive sentiments, the application of which is limited, and intended in their results to be limited to the Affairs of Europe.

That the sphere of their operations was not intended to embrace the United States of America, nor any portion of the American Hemisphere.

And finally deeply desirous as the United States are of preserving the general peace of the world, their friendly intercourse with all the European Nations, and especially the most cordial harmony and goodwill with the Imperial Government of Russia, it is due as well to their own unalterable Sentiments, as to the explicit avowal of them, called for by the communications received from the Baron de Tuyll, to declare

That the United States of America, and their Government, could not see with indifference, the forcible interposition of any European Power, other than Spain, either to restore the dominion of Spain over her emancipated Colonies in America, or to establish Monarchical Governments in those Countries, or to transfer any of the possessions heretofore or yet subject to Spain in the American Hemisphere, to any other European Power.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON 27 November 1823

The remarkable discussion this paper caused in the Cabinet is too long for insertion in this place, and is fully described in the "*Memoirs of John Quincy Adams*," vol. vi. pp. 199-212. That the timidity of the President was awakened that record shows; but the persistence of Adams, and the very weighty arguments he advanced in its favor, induced Monroe to yield, but not until it was too late for the purpose intended. For the paper



was read to the Russian Minister without the disputed paragraphs. Now that their nature is known, we may wonder at the extreme susceptibility of the President in the matter.

JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

DEAR SIR, — I am inclined to think that the second parag<sup>h</sup> had better be omitted, & that such part of the 3<sup>d</sup> be also omitted, as will make that parag<sup>h</sup>, stand, as the second distinct proposition, in our system. The principle of the paper, will not be affected by this modification, & it will be less likely to produce excitement anywhere.

Two other passages, the first in the first page, & the second, in the 3<sup>d</sup> are also marked for omission. J. M.

You had better see the Baron immediately.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 27, 1823.<sup>1</sup>

JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 27 [1823.]

The direct attack which the parag<sup>h</sup> makes on the recent of movements, of the Emperor, & of course, censure, on him, and its tendency to irritate, suggest the apprehension that it may produce an unfavorable effect. The illustration of our principles, is one thing; the doing it, in such a form, bearing directly, on what has passed, & which is avoided in the message, is another. Nevertheless, as you attach much interest to this passage, I am willing that you insert it, being very averse to your omitting any thing w<sup>ch</sup> you deem so material. J. M.<sup>2</sup>

As connected with this matter, three letters from Monroe will not be without interest, especially as they throw some light upon his position and lead up to the continuation of my story. Canning was answered; it remained to make a reply to the Russian communications. In his second letter to Jefferson, Monroe touches upon the matter, thus giving a connecting link.

MONROE TO JEFFERSON.

WASHINGTON, Dec<sup>r</sup> 4, 1823.

DEAR SIR, — I now forward to you a copy of the message, more legible than that which [was] sent by the last mail. I have concurr'd thoroughly with the sentiments expressd in your late letter, as I am

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

persuaded, you will find, by the message, as to the part we ought to act, toward the allied powers, in regard to S<sup>o</sup> America. I consider the cause of that country, as essentially our own. That the crisis is fully as menacing, as has been supposed, is confirmd, by recent communications, from another quarter, with which I will make you acquainted in my next. The most unpleasant circumstance, in these communications is, that Mr. Canning's zeal, has much abated of late. Whether this proceeds, from the unwillingness of his gov<sup>t</sup>, to recognize the new gov<sup>ts</sup>, or from offers made to it, by the allied powers, to seduce it, into their scale, we know not. We shall nevertheless be on our guard, against any contingency. Very respectfully and sincerely Yours,

JAMES MONROE.

Reed Dec. 7.<sup>1</sup>

MONROE TO S. L. GOUVERNEUR.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4, 1823.

DEAR SAMUEL, — I have only a moment to inform you that your aunt escaped her chill last night, & is much better today. She was bled yesterday & had also taken some Calomel to which we attribute this improvement.

I send you two copies of the message, better printed than that which I sent yesterday, with the information, which we possess, of the views of the allied powers, which altho' applicable to S<sup>o</sup> am; touch us, on principle, it was thought a duty to advert to the subject, & in plain terms. It has been done, nevertheless, in mild, respectful, & friendly terms. Had I omitted to put the country on its guard, & any thing had occurrd of a serious character, I should probably have been censured as it is they may look before them, and what may be deemed expedient. I shall be glad to hear in what light the warning is viewd.

I hope that neither you, Mr. Tillotson or Mr. Morris, will pledge either yourselves, or me, in favor of Mr. Randolph, further than as to the respectability of his character, & what I have heard of his estate, which I stated that I had not seen. I think it valuable, & that he would not misrepresent facts. Be on your guard as to this. Tell Maria that we are much relieved, by the favorable change in her mothers health. If she escapes to morrow, we trust, that all further anxiety will cease. affectionate regards attend you all —

Your friend

JAMES MONROE.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the Jefferson Papers in the Department of State, Washington, D. C.

<sup>2</sup> From the Monroe Papers in the New York Public Library.



## MONROE TO JEFFERSON.

WASHINGTON, Dec<sup>r</sup>, 1823.

DEAR SIR,—Shortly after the receipt of yours of the 24<sup>th</sup> of October, & while the subject treated in it, was under consideration, the Russian minister, drew the attention of the gov<sup>t</sup> to the same subject, tho' in a very different sense from that in which it had been done by Mr. Canning. Baron Tuyll, announced in an official letter, and as was understood by order of the Emperor, that having heard that the republic of Columbia had appointed a minister to Russia, he wished it to be distinctly understood that he would not receive him, nor would he receive any minister from any of the new gov<sup>ts</sup> de facto, of which the new world had been recently the theatre. On another occasion, he observ'd, that the Emperor had seen with great satisfaction, the declaration of this gov<sup>t</sup>, when those new gov<sup>ts</sup> were recognized, that it was the intention of the UStates, to remain neutral. He gave this intimation for the purpose of expressing the wish of his master, that we would persevere in the same policy. He communicated soon afterwards, an extract of a letter from his gov<sup>t</sup>, in which the conduct of the allied powers, in regard to Naples, Spain, & Portugal, was reviewed, and that policy explain'd, distinctly avowing their determination, to crush all revolutionary movements, & thereby to preserve order in the civilized world. The terms "civilized world" were probably intended to be applied to Europe only, but admitted an application to this hemisphere also. These communications were received as proofs of candour, & a friendly disposition to the UStates, but were nevertheless answer'd, in a manner equally explicit, frank, & direct, to each point. In regard to neutrality it was observ'd, when that sentim<sup>t</sup> was declar'd, that the other powers of Europe had not taken side with Spain — that they were then neutral — if they should change their policy, the state of things, on which our neutrality was declar'd, being alter'd, we would not be bound by that declaration, but might change our policy also.<sup>1</sup> Informal notes, or rather a proces verbal, of what passed in conference, to such effect, were exchanged between Mr Adams & the Russian minister, with an understanding however that they should be held confidential.

When the character of these communications, of that from Mr. Canning, & that from the Russian minister, is consider'd, & the time when made, it leaves little doubt that some project against the new gov<sup>ts</sup>, is contemplated. In what form is uncertain. It is hoped that the sentiments expressed in the message, will give a check to it. We certainly meet, in full extent, the proposition of Mr. Canning, & in the

<sup>1</sup> To this point in thick lines; showing a change of pen, and presumably a change in time, what follows being written at a later day.

mode to give it the greatest effect. If his gov<sup>t</sup> makes a similar decl<sup>n</sup>, the project will, it may be presum'd, be abandoned. By taking the step here, it is done in a manner more conciliatory with, & respectful to Russia, & the other powers, than if taken in England, and as it is thought with more credit to our gov<sup>t</sup>. Had we mov'd in the first instance in England, separated as she is in part, from those powers, our union with her, being marked, might have produced irritation with them. We know that Russia, dreads a connection between the UStates & G. Britain, or harmony in policy. Moving on our own ground, the apprehension that unless she retreats, that effect may be produced, may be a motive with her for retreating. Had we mov'd in England, it is probable, that it would have been inferr'd that we acted under her influence, & at her instigation, & thus have lost credit as well with our southern neighbours, as with the allied powers.

There is some danger that the British gov<sup>t</sup>, when it sees the part we have taken, may endeavour to throw the whole burden on us, and profit, in case of such interposition of the allied powers; of her neutrality, at our expense. But I think that this would be impossible after what has passd on the subject; besides it does not follow, from what has been said, that we should be bound to engage in the war, in such event. Of this intimations may be given, should it be necessary. A messenger will depart for Engl<sup>d</sup> with despatches for Mr. Rush in a few days, who will go on to S<sup>t</sup> Petersburg with others to Mr. Middleton. And considering the crisis, it has occur'd, that a special mission, of the first consideration from the country, directed to Engl<sup>d</sup> in the first instance, with power, to attend, any congress, that may be conven'd, on the affrs of S<sup>o</sup> am: or Mexico, might have the happiest effect. You shall hear from me further on this subject.

Very sincerely your friend

Endorsed "rec<sup>d</sup> Dec. 11." <sup>1</sup>

[no signature.]

RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Rec'd 9th October.)

No. 323.

LONDON, August 19, 1823.

SIR, — When my interview with Mr. Canning on Saturday was about to close, I transiently asked him whether, notwithstanding the late news from Spain, we might not hope that the Spaniards would get the better of all their difficulties. I had allusion to the defection of Baltasteros, in Andalusia, an event seeming to threaten with new dangers the constitutional cause. His reply was general, importing nothing more than his opinion of the increased difficulties and dangers with which, undoubtedly, this event was calculated to surround the Spanish cause.

<sup>1</sup> From the Jefferson Papers in the Department of State, Washington, D. C.



Pursuing the topick of Spanish affairs, I remarked that should France ultimately effect her purposes in Spain, there was at least the consolation left, that Great Britain would not allow her to go farther and lay her hands upon the Spanish colonies, bringing them too under her grasp. I here had in my mind the sentiments promulgated upon this subject in Mr. Canning's note to the British ambassador at Paris of the 31st of March, during the negotiations that preceded the invasion of Spain. It will be recollected that the British government say in this note, that time and the course of events appeared to have substantially decided the question of the separation of these colonies from the mother country, although their formal recognition as independent states by Great Britain might be hastened or retarded by external circumstances, as well as by the internal condition of those new states themselves; and that as his Britannic majesty disclaimed all intention of appropriating to himself the smallest portion of the late Spanish possessions in America, he was also satisfied that no attempt would be made by France to bring any of them under her dominion, either by conquest, or by cession from Spain.

By this we are to understand, in terms sufficiently distinct, that Great Britain would not be passive under such an attempt by France, and Mr. Canning, on my having referred to this note, asked me what I thought my government would say to going hand in hand with this, in the same sentiment; not as he added that any concert in action under it, could become necessary between the two countries, but that the simple fact of our being known to hold the same sentiment would, he had no doubt, by its moral effect, put down the intention on the part of France, admitting that she should ever entertain it. This belief was founded he said upon the large share of the maritime power of the world which Great Britain and the United States shared between them, and the consequent influence which the knowledge that they held a common opinion upon a question on which such large maritime interests, present and future, hung, could not fail to produce upon the rest of the world.

I replied, that in what manner my government would look upon such a suggestion, I was unable to say, but that I would communicate it in the same informal manner in which he threw it out. I said, however, that I did not think I should do so with full advantage, unless he would at the same time enlighten me as to the precise situation in which His Majesty's government stood at this moment in relation to those new states, and especially on the material point of their own independence.

He replied that Great Britain certainly never again intended to lend her instrumentality or aid, whether by mediation or otherwise, towards making up the dispute between Spain and her colonies; but that if this

result could still be brought about, she would not interfere to *prevent* it. Upon my intimating that I had supposed that all idea of Spain ever recovering her authority over the colonies had long since gone by, he explained by saying that he did not mean to controvert that opinion, for he too believed that the day had arrived when all America might be considered as lost to Europe, so far as the tie of political dependence was concerned. All that he meant was, that if Spain and the colonies should still be able to bring the dispute, not yet totally extinct between them, to a close upon terms satisfactory to both sides, and which should at the same time secure to Spain commercial or other advantages not extended to other nations, that Great Britain would not object to a compromise in this spirit of preference to Spain. All that she would ask would be to stand upon as favored a footing as any other nation after Spain. Upon my again alluding to the improbability of the dispute ever settling down now even upon this basis, he said that it was not his intention to maintain such a position, and that he had expressed himself as above rather for the purpose of indicating the feeling which this cabinet still had towards Spain in relation to the controversy, than of predicting results.

Wishing, however, to be still more specifically informed, I asked whether Great Britain was at this moment taking any step, or contemplating any, which had reference to the recognition of these states, this being the point in which we felt the chief interest.

He replied that she had taken none whatever, as yet, but was upon the eve of taking one, not final, but preparatory, and which would still leave her at large to recognize or not according to the position of events at a future period. The measure in question was, to send out one or more individuals under authority from this government to South America, not strictly diplomatic, but clothed with powers in the nature of a commission of inquiry, and which in short he described as analogous to those exercised by our commissioners in 1817; and that upon the result of this commission much might depend as to the ulterior conduct of Great Britain. I asked whether I was to understand that it would comprehend all the new states, or which of them; to which he replied that, for the present, it would be limited to Mexico.

Reverting to his first idea he again said, that he hoped that France would not, should even events in the Peninsula be favorable to her, extend her views to South America for the purpose of reducing the colonies, nominally perhaps for Spain, but in effect to subserve ends of her own; but that in case she should meditate such a policy, he was satisfied that the knowledge of the United States being opposed to it as well as Great Britain, could not fail to have its influence in checking her steps. In this way he thought good might be done by prevention, and peaceful prospects all round increased. As to the form in which



such knowledge might be made to reach France, and even the other powers of Europe, he said in conclusion that that might probably be arranged in a manner that would be free from objection.

I again told him that I would convey his suggestions to you for the information of the President, and impart to him whatever reply I might receive. My own inference rather is, that his proposition was a fortuitous one; yet he entered into it I thought with some interest, and appeared to receive with a corresponding satisfaction the assurance I gave him that it should be made known to the President. I did not feel myself at liberty to express any opinion unfavorable to it, and was as careful to give none in its favor.

Mr. Canning mentioned to me at this same interview, that a late confidential despatch which he had seen from Count Nesselrode to Count Lieven, dated, I think, in June, contained declarations respecting the Russian ukase relative to the northwest coast that were satisfactory; that they went to show that it would probably not be executed in a manner to give cause of complaint to other nations, and that, in particular, it had not yet been executed in any instance under orders issued by Russia subsequently to its first promulgation.

I have the honor to remain, with very great respect,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.

Honorable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State.

(*Enclosure with Mr. Rush's No. 325, August 23, 1823.*)

GEORGE CANNING TO RICHARD RUSH.

Private and confidential.

FOREIGN OFFICE, Aug. 20, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR, — Before leaving Town I am desirous of bringing before you in a more distinct, but still in an unofficial and confidential shape, the question which we shortly discussed the last time that I had the pleasure of seeing you.

Is not the moment come when our Governments might understand each other as to the Spanish American Colonies? And if we can arrive at such an understanding, would it not be expedient for ourselves, and beneficial for all the world, that the principles of it should be clearly settled and plainly avowed?

For ourselves we have no disguise.

1. We conceive the recovery of the Colonies by Spain to be hopeless.

2. We conceive the question of the recognition of them, as Independent States, to be one of time and circumstances.

3. We are, however, by no means disposed to throw any impedi-

ment in the way of an arrangement between them and the mother country by amicable negotiations.

4. We aim not at the possession of any portion of them ourselves.

5. We could not see any portion of them transferred to any other Power, with indifference.

If these opinions and feelings are as I firmly believe them to be, common to your Government with ours, why should we hesitate mutually to confide them to each other ; and to declare them in the face of the world ?

If there be any European Power which cherishes other projects, which looks to a forcible enterprize for reducing the colonies to subjugation, on the behalf or in the name of Spain ; or which meditates the acquisition of any part of them to itself, by cession or by conquest ; such a declaration on the part of your government and ours would be at once the most effectual and the least offensive mode of intimating our joint disapprobation of such projects.

It would at the same time put an end to all the jealousies of Spain with respect to her remaining Colonies, and to agitation which prevails in those Colonies, an agitation which it would be but humane to allay ; being determined (as we are) not to profit by encouraging it.

Do you conceive that under the power which you have recently received, you are authorized to enter into negotiation and to sign any Convention upon this subject ? Do you conceive, if that be not within your competence, you could exchange with me ministerial notes upon it ?

Nothing could be more gratifying to me than to join with you in such a work, and, I am persuaded, there has seldom, in the history of the world, occurred an opportunity when so small an effort of two friendly Governments might produce so unequivocal a good and prevent such extensive calamities.

I shall be absent from London but three weeks at the utmost ; but never so far distant but that I can receive and reply to any communication within three or four days.

I have the honor to be

My Dear Sir, with great respect and esteem

Your obedient and faithful servant

R. RUSH, Esqr.

(Signed) GEORGE CANNING.

*(Enclosure with Mr. Rush's No. 326, August 28, 1823.)*

GEORGE CANNING TO RICHARD RUSH.

Private and confidential.

LIVERPOOL, August 23, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR, — Since I wrote to you on the 20th, an additional motive has occurred for wishing that we might be able to come to some



understanding on the part of our respective Governments on the subject of my letter; to come to it soon, and to be at liberty to announce it to the world.

It is this. I have received notice, but not such a notice as imposes upon me the necessity of any immediate answer or proceeding — that so soon as the military objects in Spain are achieved (of which the French expect, how justly I know not, a very speedy achievement) a proposal will be made for a Congress, or some less formal concert and consultation, specially upon the affairs of Spanish America.

I need not point out to you all the complications to which this proposal, however dealt with by us, may lead.

Pray receive this communication in the same confidence with the former; and believe me with great truth

My Dear Sir, and esteem,

Your obedient and faithful servant,

R. RUSH, Esqr.

(Signed) GEO. CANNING.

#### RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Rec'd 5 November.)

No. 330.

LONDON, September 8, 1823.

SIR, — I yesterday received another confidential note from Mr. Canning, dated the thirty first of August, a copy of which I have the honor to enclose herewith for the President's information.

From this note it would appear that Mr. Canning is not prepared to pledge this government to an immediate recognition of the independence of the South American States. I shall renew to him a proposition to this effect when we meet; but should he continue to draw back from it, I shall on my part not act upon the overtures contained in his first note, not feeling myself at liberty to accede to them in the name of my government, but upon the basis of an equivalent. This equivalent as I now view the subject could be nothing less than the immediate and full acknowledgment of those states, or some of them, by Great Britain.

I shall send this despatch by this evening's mail to Liverpool, and have reason to hope that it will go in a ship that sails on the eighth, whereby there will have been not a moment's delay in putting you in possession of all the correspondence that has passed between Mr. Canning and me, or that now seems likely to pass, upon this delicate subject. I cannot help thinking, however, that its apparent urgency may, after all, be lessened by the turn which we may yet witness in affairs, military and political, in Spain.

I have the honor to remain with very great respect,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.

Honorable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State.

(*Enclosure with Mr. Rush's No. 330, September 8, 1823.*)

GEORGE CANNING TO RICHARD RUSH.

Private and Confidential.

STORRS, WESTMORLAND, Aug. 31, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have now to acknowledge the receipt of your answer to both my letters; and whatever may be the practical result of our confidential communication, it is an unmixed satisfaction to me that the spirit in which it began on my part, has been met so cordially on yours.

To a practical result eminently beneficial I see no obstacle; except in your want of specific powers, and in the delay which may intervene before you can procure them; and during which events may get before us.

Had you felt yourself authorized to entertain any formal proposition, and to decide upon it, without reference home, I would immediately have taken measures for assembling my Colleagues in London, upon my return, in order to be enabled to submit to you as the *act* of my government, all that I have stated to you as my own *sentiments* and theirs. But with such a delay in prospect, I think I should hardly be justified in proposing to bind ourselves to any thing positively and unconditionally; and think on the other hand that a proposition qualified either in respect to the contingency of your concurrence in it, or with reference to possible change of circumstances, would want the decision and frankness which I should wish to mark our proceeding.

Not that I anticipate any change of circumstances, which could vary the views opened to you in my first letter: — nor that, after what you have written to me in return, I apprehend any essential dissimilarity of views on the part of your Government.

But *we* must not place ourselves in a position in which, if called upon from other quarters for an opinion, we cannot give a clear and definite account not only of what we think and feel, but of what we have done or are doing, upon the matter in question. To be able to say, in answer to such an appeal, that the United States and Great Britain concur in thinking so and so — would be well. To anticipate any such appeal by a voluntary declaration to the same effect would be still better. But to have to say that we are in communication with the United States but have no conclusive understanding with them, would be inconvenient — our free agency would thus be fettered with respect to other Powers; while our agreement with you would be yet unascertained.

What appears to me, therefore, the most advisable is that you should see in my unofficial communication enough hope of good to warrant you in requiring Powers and Instructions from your Government on



this point, in addition to the others upon which you have recently been instructed and empowered; treating that communication *not* as a proposition made to you, but as the evidence of the nature of a proposition which it would have been my desire to make to you, if I had found you provided with authority to entertain it.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest esteem and respect,

My Dear Sir,

Your obedient and faithful servant,

(Signed) GEO. CANNING.

RICHARD RUSH, Esr.,  
etc., etc., etc.

#### RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Rec'd 3rd Nov.)

No. 332.

LONDON, September 20, 1823.

SIR, — Notwithstanding what I have said of the publick advantage which (as I have presumed to think and still think) would be likely to result from giving me a colleague in the negociation should it all come on, I shall, of course, prepare myself to go through it alone should the President decide not to send one out.

But as in your number seventy two, I am informed that I shall probably have one in the event of Mr. Gallatin's return to Europe, or if a successor to him should soon be appointed, I have concluded to pause until I hear from you again on this point. In my conference with Mr. Canning the day before yesterday, our attention was so exclusively engrossed by the South American subject, that that of the negociation was not mentioned by him. When however I had finished reading the introductory reflections of your number seventy two, I stated to him what you had written to me respecting a colleague, and that as I had therefore some reason to expect one, contingently, I should deem it proper and even incumbent upon me to wait a while until this contingency was decided, or until I heard something more of it from my government, as I probably should soon.

I found Mr. Canning unprepared as yet to designate in what manner, or to what extent, the negociation would be taken up by this government. He barely hinted at the number and complication of the subjects which I had laid before him.

Mr. Hughes reached London on the night of the sixth instant, and went away on the twelfth. His short stay, added to his own engagements as well as mine whilst he did stay, made it impossible for me to impart to him, in personal interviews, the various and voluminous matter embraced in my late instructions. Nevertheless, understanding your request in this respect as contained in your number seventy two,

to mean, in its spirit, that he ought in some way to be afforded the opportunity by me of being made acquainted with it all, it appeared that nothing was left but to send him the instructions themselves. I accordingly transmitted them all, by a careful hand, to his lodgings, on the morning of the ninth instant, that they might remain by him for perusal at his own convenience, and they were all safely returned to me on the day of his departure. They consisted of your despatches from number 64 to 72 inclusive, with all their enclosures.

I have the honor to remain, etc., etc.,

RICHARD RUSH.

Honorable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State.

#### RICHARD RUSH TO PRESIDENT MONROE.

Private.

LONDON, September 15, 1823.

DEAR SIR, — Mr. Canning was to have returned from his country excursion on the 11th instant, but I have not yet heard if he has got back. In the meantime I am giving myself up to investigations which may the better prepare me for taking in hand the various subjects which I have been instructed to arrange by negotiation with this government. I continue to feel their importance, and can only again promise a diligent and faithful attention to them all.

I shall expect to receive an invitation to an interview from Mr. Canning very shortly after he does return. The topick of Spanish American affairs, will doubtless be resumed in our conversations, and it is my intention to urge upon him the immediate and unequivocal recognition of those new states, by Great Britain. Upon no other footing whatever shall I feel warranted in acceding to the proposals he has made to me. I shall continue to receive in a conciliatory manner his further overtures, should he meditate any; but I am bound to own, that I shall not be able to avoid, at bottom, some distrust of the motives of all such advances to me, whether directly or indirectly, by this government, at this particular juncture of the world.

As regards the principles of traffick, and especially as regards the whole range of her foreign trade, we have, it is true, witnessed of late on the part of this nation an approach to more liberality than has governed her heretofore. It is possible that she may go farther in this policy; a policy irresistibly recommended, and, as she will not scruple herself to admit, forced upon her, by the changing circumstances of the commercial world. But, as regards the principles of political freedom, whether in relation to herself or other states, we shall not find it easy to perceive as yet any such favorable alteration in her conduct. Even if there be indications of a coming change in this latter line too, the motives of it are perhaps not all of a nature to challenge our ready con-



fidence and cooperation. We have seen her wage a war of 20 years at a cost of treasure and blood incalculable, in support of the independence of other states (as she said) when that independence was threatened by a movement proceeding from the *people* of France. We have seen her at the close of that contest abandoning the great interests of the people of other states, anxious apparently only about monarchs and thrones. We have seen her at the same epoch become in effect a member of the Holy Alliance; though she could not in form, and continue to abet its principles up to the attack on Naples. Even then the separation was but partial, and, true to her sympathy with the monarchical principle, we find her faith pledged and her fleets ready to interpose not on any new extremity of wrong or oppression to the *people* of Naples, but on any molestation to the royal family. Since the present year set in, she has proclaimed and until now cautiously maintained her neutrality under an attack by France upon the independence of Spain, as unjust, as nefarious, and as cruel, as the annals of mankind can recount, this attack having been made upon the people of a country, by a legitimate king, urged on by legitimate nobles. It is thus that Britain has been from the very beginning, positively or negatively, auxiliary to the evils with which this Alliance under the mark of Christianity has already affected the old, and is now menacing the new world. It is under this last stretch of ambition that she seems about to be roused, not, as we seem forced to infer after all we have seen, from any objections to the arbitrary principles of the Combination, for the same men are still substantially at the head of her affairs; but rather from the apprehensions which are now probably coming upon her, touching her own influence and standing through the formidable and encroaching career of these continental potentates. She at last perceives a crisis likely to come on, bringing with it peril to her own commercial prospects on the other side of the Atlantic, and to her political sway in both hemispheres. Hence probably some of her recent and remarkable solitudes. The former war of 20 years more than once shook her prosperity and brought hazards to her existence, though for the most part she was surrounded by allies. A second war of like duration with no ally for her in Europe might not have a second field of Waterloo for its termination. Such are the prospective dangers that possibly do not escape her.

The estimate which I have formed of the genius of this government, as well as of the characters of the men who direct, or who influence, all its operations, would lead me to fear that we are not as yet likely to witness any very material changes in the part which Britain has acted in the world for the past fifty years, when the cause of freedom has been at stake; the part which she acted in 1774 in America, which she has since acted in Europe, and is now acting in Ireland. I shall there-

fore find it hard to keep from my mind the suspicion that the approaches of her ministers to me at this portentous juncture for a concert of policy which they have not heretofore courted with the United States, are bottomed on their own calculations. I wish that I could sincerely see in them a true concern for the rights and liberties of mankind. Nevertheless, whatever may be the *motive* of these approaches, if they give promise of leading to good *effects*, effects which the United States from principle and from policy would delight to hail, I grant that a dispassionate and friendly ear should be turned to them, and such shall be my aim in the duties before me.

In exhibiting the foregoing summary of the opinions which have been impressed upon me during my publick residence in this quarter, I would not have it inferred that I intend they should comprehend the imputation of any sinister motives towards the United States, as peculiar to the British cabinet as it is now composed. I am so far from thinking so, that I believe the present cabinet to be as well disposed towards us permanently as any party in England, and at this moment more cordially so than any other party. I believe that if Earl Grey and his associates were to come into power tomorrow that we should not get better terms, if as good, in our approaching negociation, should it come on, as from Mr. Canning and his associates. I would say the same thing of a cabinet to be composed of such men as Sir Francis Burdett and Mr. Hobhouse; and should it happen that Mr. Canning and Lord Liverpool ever become actively and publicly in their official places the advocates of a policy more intimate and friendly in all respects towards the United States than any hitherto adopted (a contingency not impossible, no matter from what motives arising) I do not fear to predict that we shall in the end see the whigs and reformers the decided opponents of such a policy. As regards the beneficent principle of abolishing privateering, for example, I should little expect to see the whigs its patrons, since I have heard Sir James Macintosh denounce it in parliament since I have been here.

I remain, dear sir, with the highest respect,

Your faithful and attached sert

President MONROE.<sup>1</sup>

RICHARD RUSH.

#### RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Rec'd 19 Nov.)

No. 334.

LONDON, October 2, 1823.

SIR,—I had another interview with Mr. Canning on the twenty sixth of last month, at Gloucester Lodge, his residence a short distance from town.

<sup>1</sup> From the Monroe MSS., Department of State, Washington, D. C.



The immediate motive of his inviting me to this interview was, to show me a despatch which he had just received from Sir Charles Stewart, the British Ambassador at Paris, which had a bearing upon our late conferences respecting Spanish America. It recounted a short conversation which he had had with our chargé d'affaires at that Court, Mr. Sheldon, the purport of which was, that Sir Charles having taken occasion to mention to Mr. Sheldon the projects of France and the Alliance upon Spanish America, Mr. Sheldon replied that the government of the United States was aware of them all, and disapproved of them. Mr. Canning, inferring that this reply of our chargé d'affaires probably rested upon some instructions or information from the government of the United States, also inferred that it might lend its aid towards my consent to his proposals of the 20th of August. He added, that the despatch of Sir Charles Stewart had proceeded from no previous communication whatever from him (Mr. Canning) upon the subject, but had been altogether written on his own motion.

I replied, that what instructions or information the Legation of the United States at Paris might have received upon this subject, I could not undertake to say with confidence; but that I scarcely believed any had reached it which were not common to me. That certainly I had none, other than those general instructions which I had already mentioned to him, evidently never framed to meet the precise crisis which he supposed to be at hand respecting Spanish America, but under the comprehensive spirit of which I was nevertheless willing to go forward with him in his proposals upon the terms I had stated, in the hope of meeting this crisis.

He now declared that this government felt great embarrassments as regarded the immediate recognition of these new states, embarrassments which had not been common to the United States, and asked whether I could not give my assent to his proposals on a promise by Great Britain of *future* acknowledgment. To this intimation I gave an immediate and unequivocal refusal. Further conversation passed between us though chiefly of a desultory nature, (it shall be reported at a future time,) and the conference ended by his saying that he would invite me to another interview in the course of a few days.

Having waited until now without yet hearing from him, I have concluded to write you thus much of what passed on the 26th, without more delay. It does not fall within any of my intentions to accede to Mr. Canning's overtures but on the basis of a *previous* and explicit acknowledgment of the new states by this government in manner as formal and ample in all respects as was done by the United States, whose act of acknowledgment will be the example upon which I shall stand. Even then, the guarded manner in which alone my consent will be given when I come to use the name of my government, will, I

trust, be found to free the step from all serious exception on my part, should I finally take it.

I cannot be unaware, that in this whole transaction the British cabinet are striving for their own ends; yet if these ends promise in this instance to be also auspicious to the safety and independence of all Spanish America, I persuade myself that we cannot look upon them but with approbation. England it is true has given her countenance, and still does, to all the evils with which the holy Alliance have afflicted Europe; but if she at length has determined to stay the career of their formidable and despotick ambition in the other hemisphere, the United States seem to owe it to all the policy and to all the principles of their system, to hail the effects whatever may be the motives of her conduct.

Mr. Canning at the close of the above interview, expressed his desire, that in informing my government of his communications to me, I would treat them as entirely confidential, as well the verbal as the written; the more so if no act resulted from them. That no act will result from them, is my present belief.

I have the honor to remain, with very great respect,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.

Honorable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State.

#### RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Rec'd 19 Nov.)

No. 336.

LONDON, October 10, 1823.

SIR, — At the conference with Mr. Canning the day before yesterday, he said nothing of Spanish American affairs, except barely to remark at parting, that he should send off consuls to the new states very soon, perhaps in the course of this month. I asked whether *consuls* or commercial agents. He said he believed they might as well be called by the former name, as they would be invested with the powers and charged with the duties that belonged to the consular office. I asked if they would be received in that capacity by the governments between which and Great Britain no political or diplomatic relations had yet been formed. He said, that this he did not know with any certainty; he rather supposed that they would be received.

I saw him again at the foreign office yesterday, and he said not one single word relative to South America, although the occasion was altogether favorable for resuming the topick, had he been disposed to resume it. I therefore consider that all further discussion between us in relation to it is now at an end. I had myself regarded the questions involved in the discussion as essentially changed by the arrival



of the news of the convention of the 4th of July between Buenos Ayres and the commissioners from Spain; and of the complete annihilation of the remnant of the royal forces in Colombia under Morales, on the third of August, both which pieces of intelligence have reached England since the twenty sixth of September, the date of my last conference with Mr. Canning on the South American subject.

The termination of the discussion between us may be thought somewhat sudden, not to say abrupt, considering how zealously as well as spontaneously it was started on his side. As I did not commence it, it is not my intention to revive it. If I had actually acceded to his proposals, I should have endeavored to have placed my conduct in a satisfactory light before the President. The motives of it would not, I flatter myself, have been disapproved. But as the whole subject is now before my government, and as I shall do nothing further in it without instructions, I should deem it out of place to travel into any new reasons in support of a step not in fact taken.

Mr. Canning not having acceded to my proposal, nor I to his, we stand as we were before his first advance to me, with the exception only of the light which the intervening discussion may be supposed to have shed upon the dispositions and policy of England in this important matter. It appears that having ends of her own in view, she has been anxious to facilitate their accomplishment by invoking my auxiliary offices as the minister of the United States at this court; but as to the independence of the new states of America, for their own benefit, that this seems quite another question in her diplomacy. It is France that must not be aggrandized, not South America that must be made free. The former doctrine may fitly enough return upon Britain as part of her permanent political creed; but not having been taught to regard it as also incorporated with the foreign policy of the United States, I have forborne to give it gratuitous succour. I would have brought myself to minister to it incidentally on this occasion, only in return for a boon which it was in the power of Britain herself to have offered; a boon that might have closed the sufferings and brightened the prospects of those infant Republics emerging from the new world, and seeming to be connected as by a great moral chain with our own destinies.

Whether any fresh explanations with France since the fall of Cadiz may have brought Mr. Canning to so full and sudden a pause with me, I do not know, and most likely never shall know if events so fall out that Great Britain no longer finds it necessary to seek the aid of the United States in furtherance of her schemes of counteraction as against France or Russia. That the British cabinet, and the governing portion of the British nation, will rejoice at heart in the downfall of the constitutional system in Spain, I have never had a

doubt and have not now, so long as this catastrophe can be kept from crossing the path of British interests and British ambition. This nation in its collective, corporate, capacity has no more sympathy with popular rights and freedom now, than it had on the plains of Lexington in America; than it showed during the whole progress of the French revolution in Europe, or at the close of its first great act, at Vienna, in 1815; than it exhibited lately at Naples in proclaiming a neutrality in all other events, save that of the safety of the royal family there; or, still more recently, when it stood aloof whilst France and the Holy Alliance avowed their intention of crushing the liberties of unoffending Spain, of crushing them too upon pretexts so wholly unjustifiable and enormous that English ministers, for very shame, were reduced to the dilemma of speculatively protesting against them, whilst they allowed them to go into full action. With a king in the hands of his ministers, with an aristocracy of unbounded opulence and pride, with what is called a house of commons constituted essentially by this aristocracy and always moved by its influence, England can, in reality, never look with complacency upon popular and equal rights, whether abroad or at home. She therefore moves in her natural orbit when she wars, positively or negatively, against them. For their own sakes alone, she will never war in their favor.

In the conference with Mr. Canning at Gloucester Lodge on the 26th of last month, he informed me that this government had sent out three commissioners to Mexico with objects such as I have already stated in a former communication to you. Should the course and progress of events after their arrival in Mexico, render recognition by Great Britain advisable, one of these commissioners was furnished, he said, with contingent credentials to be minister, another would be constituted secretary of Legation, and the third consul. He also said that these appointments, as well as those of commercial agents or consuls, whichsoever they might be, to go to the new states generally, would probably have the effect of inviting in the end further approaches from them all, to an intercourse with Great Britain, which approaches, should they be made, might be met by Great Britain, according to circumstances.

It may perhaps afford room for conjecture what has led to the preference of Mexico over the other ex-colonies for such a provisional diplomatic representation. I have heard a rumour, that an eye to some immediate advantage from the mines of that country has been the motive. Whilst the independence of Mexico has been of more recent establishment, it seems not less true, that her advances to internal stability have been less sure than we have seen in some of the other new states. Mr. Canning himself in one of our conversations thought fit to select Mexico as affording a prominent illustration of interior disquiet. Whether then the above rumour is the key to this early preference, or



the proximity of this new state to the territories of the United States — or what considerations may have led to it, a little more time will probably disclose. It may rest on the mere fact of her greater population and riches.

Mr. Canning also informed me, that orders would be given by this government to its squadron in the West Indies, to protect the trade of British subjects (to the extent of making reprisals if necessary) with the Spanish colonies, in case the licence for this trade which the Cortes granted in January last was not renewed. It will be recollected, that the same decree of the Cortes in that month which settled, under a threat of reprisals, the British claims upon Spain for captures, laid open the trade of the ultra marine provinces to Britain for ten years. This period of time being upon the eve of expiring, the intention of Britain is, to revive the orders for reprisals by her squadron, unless the time be extended.

So much for a measure against Spain in her present extremity. It will next be seen that her ex-colonies come in for their share of this prompt and summary species of remedy of which Britain is setting other nations the example, for Mr. Canning also informed me that if the Colombian government did not make speedy reparation for the alleged aggression committed upon a British ship by the fort at Bocachica at the entrance of the bay of Carthagena, orders would be given to blockade that port. He remarked that the blockade would be confined merely to Bocachica as a measure of local redress, other satisfaction having been refused, and that it was intended that an explanation to this effect should be given to the government of Colombia, through a neutral minister residing at that government. He added that his wish was, that the minister of the United States should be the channel of communication. Into the detail of circumstances that belong to this alleged aggression Mr. Canning did not go. From the account I have had of it from the Colombian minister in this city, Mr. Ravenga, I infer and believe that the offence was on the side of the British ship.

The subject of blockade being mentioned, Mr. Canning asked me if I knew in what manner my government would be likely to view the turning off of our frigate by the French squadron from before Cadiz, with our ministers Mr. Nelson and Mr. Rodney on board. I said that I did not, and in turn asked him how England would act under similar circumstances. His first reply consisted of an expression of his satisfaction that England had had the good fortune to escape from such a difficulty at this juncture, and that the question had fallen into such good hands as ours! But next I asked, how a British blockading force would treat a neutral frigate under the same circumstances. He said he would be quite candid in his answer; that, all things considered, it did not become England *to reason down maritime or belligerent*

*doctrines*; that the case was an unusual one; he recollected in modern history but one other instance of a besieged king, which was that of the king of Denmark; that had a neutral ship of war, a Russian frigate for example, attempted to enter the harbour of Copenhagen when the British fleet was investing it, the Captain alleging that he was carrying a letter to the Danish king, he must say that he thought the British admiral would not have permitted the frigate to pass for such a purpose; he even inclined to believe, that a neutral vessel of war would not have been allowed to pass under such circumstances, for any purpose. These were his sentiments though he spoke, he said, without any full or exact examination of the subject.

I replied, that neither was I master of the subject, though awake to the interest of it; that I had, from a personal curiosity, been turning in a cursory manner to some of the admiralty books in the hope of getting light upon it, but as yet could only say that I had found nothing. I was disposed to think that book learning upon the point would be found scanty, and that it would have to be decided by recurring to principles. Nothing further was said on the subject, and I must own that I draw no very favorable augury to parts of our coming negotiation, from as much as fell from him whilst we were upon it.

Throughout the progress of our discussion on Spanish American affairs, I thought it proper to apprise Mr. Ravenga, confidentially, of all that was going on. I take this opportunity of saying, that I have had equal pleasure in all my personal intercourse with this gentleman, and in my attempts to subserve the interests of his country.

At the close of my interview with Mr. Canning I took occasion to say to him, that, if no objections existed to the request, I should be glad to be furnished with a copy of the note from Count Nesselrode to Count Lieven relative to the Russian ukase, of which I have made mention in my number 323. He replied that he would have been happy to comply with my request, but that having asked Count Lieven for permission to give out a copy of the note, the Count had said that he did not feel authorized to grant a copy with that view.

I have the honor to remain, with very great respect,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.

Honorable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Spanish American topick has been dropped by Mr. Canning in a most extraordinary manner. Not another word has he said to me on it since the 26<sup>th</sup> of last month, at the interview at Gloucester Lodge, which I have described in my despatches to the department, and he has now gone out of town to spend the remainder of this, and part of the next month. I shall not renew the topick, and should he, which I do not expect, I shall decline going into it again, saying that I must now wait until I hear from my government." Rush to Monroe, 22 October, 1823.



## DANIEL SHELDON TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

(private)

PARIS, 30 October, 1823.

SIR, — Soon after the date of my dispatch of the 18th of this month, I was informed by the British Ambassador that he had conferred with the French Ministers (M. de Chateaubriand and M. de Villele) on the subject of the Spanish American Colonies. He told me that his object had been to prevent them from engaging hastily in any measures relating to those Colonies, and that he had insisted that whatever measures might be taken should be adopted in common and after consultation among the powers really interested in the question, which were England, France, and the U. S. alone, the interest of the great Continental Powers of Europe being, on this particular point only, of a secondary nature. The french Ministers assured him that they would undertake nothing by themselves, and that the subject would be brought forward for mutual consideration. In the *Journal des Débats*, the Ministerial paper, of to day, will be found an article, confirming entirely this principle. It is however most probable that France will insist upon the concurrence of the Continental Powers and will reject entirely that of the U. S. The subject has never been mentioned to me in any way whatever by any of the French ministers. The motive for this course on their part is obvious enough; — the United States having acknowledged the independence of the Colonies, they cannot be expected to concur in or assent to any measures not having that result for their basis; and they are not yet prepared here to go that length, though it is difficult to conceive that England would consent to any plan which would again place the Colonies under the dominion of Spain. At all events, no steps are likely to be taken hastily or immediately in relation to those countries; and, indeed, the affairs of the mother Country will yet require for some time all the cares of this Government. The Article of the *Journal des débats* announces that Councils of moderation have at last made some impression on the King. The course he was taking alarmed not only the Ministry, but the Politicians here who are many degrees higher toned than the Ministry. Even Russia is obliged to insist upon moderation, and Pozzo, who is gone to Madrid, will exercise the influence of that Power to soften down the system the King is disposed to adopt, and which, from his untractable nature, there is great difficulty in persuading him to abandon. I have the honor to be, with great Respect, Sir, your most Obed<sup>t</sup> & very humble servant (s<sup>d</sup>)

D<sup>L</sup> SHELDON J<sup>r</sup>

The Hon: JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Secretary of State, Washington.

(Endorsement) private Oct<sup>r</sup> 30, 1823. M<sup>r</sup> Sheldon to M<sup>r</sup> Adams.<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup> From the Monroe Papers in the Department of State, Washington, D. C.

## RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

No. 346.

[LONDON, November 26, 1823.]

SIR,—I had an interview with Mr. Canning on the twenty fourth instant, at the foreign office, when he afforded me some information on Spanish American affairs which I now proceed to lay before you.

He began by saying that our conversations on this subject at Gloucester Lodge, (on the 26th of September,) having led him to conclude that nothing could be accomplished between us, owing to the ground which I had felt it necessary to take respecting the immediate recognition of the late colonies by Great Britain, he had deemed it indispensable as no more time was to be lost, that Great Britain should herself, without any concert with the United States, come to an explanation with France. He had, accordingly, seen the Prince de Polignac, the French Ambassador at this court, and stated to him that as it was fit that the two courts should understand each other, distinctly, on the Spanish American question, it was his intention to unfold the views of Great Britain in an official note to him, the prince, or to Sir Charles Stewart, the British Ambassador at Paris, to be communicated to the French Court; or in the form of an oral conference with the Prince himself,—whichever of these modes the latter might indicate as preferable. The Prince taking some interval to decide, it was finally agreed to adopt the method of oral conference, with the precaution of making a minute of the conversation; so that each government might have in its possession a record of what passed, to be previously assented to, as correct on both sides.

In pursuance of this course Mr. Canning held several conferences with the Prince de Polignac, in the early part of October, in which each party unfolded the views of their respective governments, on this branch of public affairs, and agreed upon the written memorandum or paper which was to embody them.

This paper Mr. Canning said was of a nature which did not leave him at liberty to offer me a copy of it; but he had invited me to the foreign office, for the purpose of reading it to me, having only since his return to town last week exhibited it to the ministers of other powers, and not yet to all of them.

He accordingly read the paper to me. When he had closed, I said to him, notwithstanding what had previously fallen from him about not giving a copy of it, that its whole matter was so interwoven with our past discussions, verbal and written, upon the same subject, that I could not help thinking that my government would naturally expect a copy, as the regular termination of a subject, the previous stages of which it had been my special duty to make known to my government.



To this remark he replied that he would willingly furnish me with a copy of that part of it which embodied the views of this government, but that, where those of France were at stake, he did not feel that he had the same discretion; upon which footing my remarks was left without more commentary.

I am therefore relieved from the task of recapitulating to you the contents of that portion of this paper of which I may expect to receive a copy. The points which chiefly arrested my attention, as new to me, (and these I now communicate without waiting for the paper itself) were, that Great Britain declares that she will recognize the independence of the colonies, first, *in case France should employ force in aid of their re-subjugation*; or, secondly, *in case Spain herself, reverting to her ancient system, should attempt to put a stop to the trade of Britain with those colonies*. But it is not said what Britain will do beyond recognizing their independence, her ulterior conduct being left to be shaped, as we may infer, by ulterior events. She claims a right to trade with the colonies, *on the footing of a permission given by Spain herself*, so long back as 1810, as an equivalent for British mediation, offered at that day between the parent state and the colonies. As regards the form of government most desirable for the colonies as independent states, a preference is expressed for *monarchy*, could it be practicable.

With the exception of the foregoing points, I recollect nothing material in the paper as regards the policy or intentions of Great Britain, not heretofore made known in my own communications upon this subject, beginning with that of the 19th of August, and continued in my numbers 325, 326, 330, 334 and 336. The letter of Mr. Canning to Sir Charles Stuart of the 31st. of March, 1823, is still assumed as the basis of the policy of Great Britain.

To report, with the requisite fidelity, the views of France, from this paper read over but once to me, I might find an office more hazardous, from the fact of my having had less acquaintance beforehand with them. I shall, therefore, not attempt to do so, with any detail, from a fear that I might err. I have also the confident hope that an entire copy of it, although not given to me, will get to your hands, through some other channel. I am not able for my own share to discern the adequate motives for wrapping it up in such secrecy, and have little doubt but that even the public journals of Europe will, before very long, enlighten us, with sufficient precision, upon all its contents. The London journals of the present week have themselves made a beginning towards this end.

Having said thus much, I will proceed in my endeavours, to state the main points of this paper where it was illustrative of the policy of France.

1. It declares that France, like England, regards the recovery of the colonies by Spain as hopeless.

2. It expresses the *determination* (I think this was the very word), of France, not to assist Spain in attempting their re-conquest.

3. It expresses the desire of France to see the dispute made up by amicable arrangements, between the mother country and the colonies.

4. It disclaims for France all idea of deriving exclusive commercial advantages from the colonies, saying that, like England, she only asks to be placed on the footing of the most favored nation, after Spain.

5. It knows not what there is to be *recognized* as independent in the colonies, France regarding all government there as a mockery. The reasoning employed is to this effect.

6. It labors to show the necessity of assembling a congress, to which England should be a party, (which she declines) to bring about the benevolent end of reclaiming those remote regions from their past errors, and making up the dispute between them and the parent state, upon terms satisfactory to both, as the policy worthy of both !

These were the material points of the paper, as I collected them. I am sensible that I state some of them in a way to start further questions as to their true meaning, questions which I could myself raise, without, at this moment, being able to resolve them. Whether, among other things, France is to abstain from all kinds of aid to Spain, (force she says she will not employ) does not appear quite clear to my recollection. The apprehensions of Britain however seem to be fully allayed, at least for the present, on the score of French aggrandizement in Spanish America, and it is certain that she does not now anticipate any speedy interruption of the peace of Europe from this cause.

Whether her apprehensions on this score were ever real, notwithstanding Mr. Canning's advances to me, or whether France, from uneasiness at a prospect of collision with Britain, has, herself, receded, for a while, from her ambitious projects, and only for a while, are points around which there may be some obscurity. The language which she now holds to Britain is obviously at variance with that which her manifestos breathed when her troops entered Spain in the spring. Her duplicity, therefore, in this whole peninsular war, from her memorable avowals respecting the cordon sanitaire, to the present time, appears to have been as signal as her ambition.

In the course of the paper on the British side, there is allusion to the interest that the United States have in the question, which is met, on the side of France by a declaration that she does not profess to be acquainted with our views on the subject. It is in the part which relates to the assembling of a congress. I might probably have made myself more accurately master of the whole paper, by recurring,



in conversation, to a few of the passages after Mr. Canning had finished reading it; but I was precluded the opportunity of doing this from his being pressed, (whether by his previous wishes or otherwise, I will not say) with another appointment, a very few moments after he had closed.

Notwithstanding the tranquillizing professions of France, it would seem that the sentiments of Russia, (if we may so infer from Pozzo di Borgo's address to Ferdinand, which has just come before the world) are, that the Holy Alliance consider themselves as still bound to keep a superintending eye upon the affairs of Spain, throughout all her dominions.

I have the honor to remain with very great respect, your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.<sup>1</sup>

GEORGE CANNING TO RICHARD RUSH.

Private & Confidential.

GLOUCESTER LODGE, Dec<sup>r</sup> 13, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR, — In transmitting to you a copy of the memorandum of a Conference between the French Ambassador and me, upon the affairs of Spanish America, (which I had the honor to read to you yesterday) I am naturally led to revert to what passed between us in the summer upon that subject.

Had you had it in your power, at that time, to concur in any joint consideration of the measures to be adopted, you know how happy I should have been to be enabled to propose such a concert. But time, and the pressure of events did not allow of an indefinite postponement of a matter, which was liable, from day to day, to be brought into immediate discussion by other Powers. Our step was therefore taken within a few weeks after the last interchange of confidential letters between us. The result is before you. You will see that we were not unmindful of your claim to be heard: but I flatter myself that neither you nor we shall now have to lift our voice against any of the designs which were apprehended a few months ago.

I am sure you will feel, Sir, and I trust it will be felt by your Government that the confidence which I individually reposed in you is sacred; and that our intercourse in August not having led to any

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS. "The conduct of England on this question [South America], as it seems to me, has turned out to be devoid of all justice, of all magnanimity, and even of all true foresight and policy. She at last declares that she will recognize, not because the new states are *de facto* independent and entitled to it; but she issues her *intentions* in the light of a *threat* to be executed on the contingent misdeeds of France or Spain." Rush to Monroe, 1 December, 1823.

practical result, nor become matter of discussion between our respective governments will be considered as having passed between two individuals relying upon each others honour and discretion.

I communicate the paper to you in such a way, as to relieve you from any difficulty in transmitting it to your Government.

I have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard, my dear Sir, your obed<sup>t</sup> & faithful servant,

GEORGE CANNING.<sup>1</sup>

RICHARD RUSH TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

No. 354.

LONDON, December 27, 1823.

SIR, — In my letter No. 346 of the 26th of November, I had the honor to mention that I requested of Mr. Canning a copy of the paper which he read to me embodying the views of England and France relative to Spanish America, and that he replied that he would do so of as much of it as related to England, but that over the portion of it that contained the exposition of the views of France he did not feel that he was at liberty to exercise the same option. The attempt to draw this line seemed to me at the time unnecessary, and perhaps would have been found not very easy in practice, and accordingly in the interview which I had with Mr. Canning on the twelfth of this month referring again to the above paper, and to the request I had made of him to be furnished with a copy of the whole of it, he said that he now felt himself able to comply, the French Government having furnished other states with a copy of it; and he promised to send me the entire copy in a few days. I have abstained from mentioning this promise to you in my intermediate communications, preferring to wait until the paper itself reached me.

I have this day received it accompanied by a note from Mr. Canning, dated the 13th instant, and headed "Confidential," in which he informs me that I am at liberty to communicate it to my government, but only as a confidential paper, not to be made public in the United States. A note of a few lines from Mr. Planta dated yesterday, explains the delay which has taken place in sending it to me. Another note from Mr. Canning, dated also on the 13th instant, and headed "private and confidential" was received at the same time, in which he reverts to what passed between us in the summer on this Spanish American question, states his reason for having gone on to act without my concurrence, and intimates a hope that neither the United States nor Great Britain will now be called upon to lift their voice against the designs that were recently apprehended. In this latter note it will

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.



also be perceived what renewed anxiety is manifested that the whole subject may be treated by my government as entirely confidential. I have replied in two separate notes of this date to both of Mr. Canning's, and enclose copies of all the correspondence. It will be seen in Mr. Canning's notes that he describes the paper as having been read to me on the 12th instant. This is a mistake. He read it to me on the 24th of November, as my communication to you of the 26th of that month shows. The mistake is not material, and is only noticed lest it should otherwise be inferred that the paper was read to me a second time, which was not the case.

It is plain in my belief, that this extraordinary solicitude for secrecy springs from an unwillingness in this government to risk the cordiality of its standing with the Holy Alliance to any greater extent than can be avoided. All serious danger to Spanish America, being now at an end, I do not at present see what there is to prevent a return to that effective amity between Great Britain and that alliance which has heretofore existed. Events the most recent and authoritative justify us in saying, that no attempt upon the liberties of Europe, will essentially throw Britain off from the connexion, or impair her coequal allegiance to the monarchical principle; and the authentic paper of her government which I this day transmit, indicates that the danger of disunion from the Spanish American question has had its source not in any concern of Britain at fresh strides of Tyranny in the alliance, but in an ambitious uneasiness in her Councils at French or other Continental interposition reaching a point which threatened at last to trench upon the commercial empire of England, an empire over which her statesmen never cease to keep the most jealous watch. As regards the essential rights of the Spanish American States, their internal polity and organization, it will be seen from the paper, that the foreign Secretary of England permits the most revolting doctrines to be laid down by the Ambassador of France without one word of dissent or disapprobation. Some of the questions that started to my mind when I undertook to report the contents of this paper to you from having heard it read, are not entirely solved, I must say, on a more deliberate examination of it.

In my interview with Mr. Canning on the 12th of this month, he said that the Continental powers had intended to hold a Congress, not, as they now alleged, to coerce the late Colonies, but to assist Spain with their deliberations and advice towards recovering their supremacy over them; but that Spain's proposals had been of a nature to frustrate all their wishes. Their offer to assist her as above had lately been made through the French Ambassador at Madrid. Spain, through the same channel, had simply said in reply, that France, Russia, and the other allies had nothing to do but to furnish ships, troops and money

for the re-conquest, which being effected, Spain was ready to requite them all by a grant of equivalent advantages to be drawn from the Colonies. France had sent these proposals back to Spain as not fit to be entertained, and thus as Mr. Canning seemed to infer, has vanished the project of the Congress. One other scheme only remained, he said, for reducing the Colonies, more wild however, as he added, than all former ones. This was by an association in the form of a private company to be composed of capitalists and bankers in sufficient numbers, and deriving a charter from Spain, which company with their funds were to hire ships and troops for the reconquest and seek their remuneration in certain exclusive rights of trade to be granted to them, and also in the transfer to them of an interest in the mines of Mexico and Peru. Some modification of this visionary scheme has since made a figure in the journals of Europe, serving, in this country at least, to excite the public derision.

But the most decisive blow to all despotick interference with the new States is that which it has received in the President's Message at the opening of Congress. It was looked for here with extraordinary interest at this juncture, and I have heard that the British packet which left New York the beginning of this month was instructed to wait for it and bring it over with all speed. It is certain that this vessel first brought it, having arrived at Falmouth on the 24th instant. On its publicity in London which followed as soon afterwards as possible the credit of all the Spanish American securities immediately rose, and the question of the final and complete safety of the new States from all European coercion, is now considered as at rest.

I have the honor to remain, with very great respect your obt servt,  
 RICHARD RUSH.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From the Adams MSS.



JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

AND

EMANCIPATION UNDER MARTIAL LAW (1819-1842)

BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS





# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

AND

EMANCIPATION UNDER MARTIAL LAW (1819-1842).

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READING recently a very suggestive English book, just from the press, entitled "Imperium et Libertas," I came across the following: "Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff records, in his 'Notes from a Diary,' the saying of an old English Jesuit: 'It is surprising how much good a man may do in the world if he allows others to take the credit of it.'"

This pregnant, if somewhat cynical, utterance was recalled to my memory by the paper, naturally interesting to me, just read by Mr. Ford. Looking back over the history of the United States during the last century, I think there would be a general concurrence of opinion that the two most notable utterances of presidents of the United States during the whole hundred years were the presidential Message of 1823, in which the "Monroe Doctrine," so called, was enunciated, and the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln, of January 1, 1863. Though separated one from the other by forty years of time, the influence of those two pronunciamentos — for both of them were pronunciamentos, in the strict sense of the word — is still felt, and they are constantly referred to in familiar speech. Every one, for instance, knows to a certain extent what is meant when reference is made to the Monroe Doctrine or to the Emancipation Proclamation. In common parlance, the definite article is always prefixed to each.

In the paper just read, Mr. Ford has shown that, though called by the name of Monroe, the famous doctrine set forth in the Message of 1823 originated almost *verbatim, literatim et punctuatim*, as well as in scope and spirit, with Monroe's Secretary of State. In view of the continued and long discussion

as to authorship, whether the doctrine in question took its shape with President or Secretary, it is a matter of no little surprise to me that the documentary evidence just produced by Mr. Ford now first sees the light. It has quietly reposed in the files at Quincy, perfectly accessible, through more than forty years. Yet, strange as it appears and is, it never occurred to me to look for it before, and apparently it never occurred to my father so to do, when at work on the "Memoirs of J. Q. Adams." Much included in that publication might have been omitted to advantage, if the documents Mr. Ford has to-day brought to light had there found a place instead.

As to President Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation, the second most memorable presidential utterance of a century, it is a fact, though one which has not yet found its fully recognized place in history, that Monroe's Secretary of State was hardly less closely identified with it than with the first hardly less memorable and famous utterance of forty years previous. A year ago I had occasion to deliver an address at the dedication of the building of the State Historical Society at Madison, Wisconsin. In the course of that address my subject led me to refer to the attitude taken by J. Q. Adams in certain memorable episodes of his Congressional life connected with the great Slavery debate, and I called attention to the fact that he then enunciated the principle of constitutional, international law, which afterwards furnished the basis of Lincoln's Proclamation. Though more than twenty years earlier, he in those utterances clearly blazed the path to that great state paper, and its far-reaching consequences.

The record on this point is of much historical interest. So far as I developed it in the address to which I have referred at Madison, I propose, for the purpose of convenient reference, to incorporate it in our Proceedings with Mr. Ford's paper, in this way bringing the connection of J. Q. Adams with one of those important State papers in close conjunction with his connection with the other.

In doing so, moreover, stimulated by the success which has attended Mr. Ford's examination of the files in connection with the Monroe doctrine, I have put the papers at Quincy to a similar examination in connection with the Emancipation Proclamation. I now therefore incorporate into the Proceed-



ings of to-day the record of J. Q. Adams relating to Emancipation, not only so far as I had succeeded in exhuming it from the Congressional Record and from the published Memoirs at the time of the delivery of my Madison Address, but I supplement and complete that record by a considerable body of other, not uninteresting, material, the fruit of a more careful examination of documents, published and unpublished.

I quote first from the Appendix to the Madison Address :

“ In 1836, Mr. Adams represented in Congress what was then the Massachusetts ‘ Plymouth ’ district. In April of that year the issue, which, just twenty-five years later, was to result in overt civil war, was fast assuming shape ; for, on the 21st of the month, the battle of San Jacinto was fought, resulting immediately in the independence of Texas, and, more remotely, in its annexation to the United States and the consequent war of spoliation (1846-48) with Mexico. At the same time petitions in great number were pouring into Congress from the Northern states asking for the abolition of slavery, and the prohibition of the domestic slave trade in the District of Columbia. The admission into the Union of Arkansas, with a constitution recognizing slavery, was also under consideration. In the course of a long personal letter dated April 4, 1836, written to the Hon. Solomon Lincoln, of Hingham, a prominent constituent of his, Mr. Adams made the following incidental reference to the whole subject, indicative of the degree to which the question of martial law as a possible factor in the solution of the problem then occupied his mind : —

“ ‘ The new pretensions of the slave representation in Congress, of a right to refuse to receive petitions, and that Congress have no constitutional power to abolish slavery or the slave trade in the District of Columbia forced upon me so much of the discussion as I did take upon me, but in which you are well aware I did not and could not speak a tenth part of my mind. I did not, for example, start the question whether by the law of God and of nature man can hold property, hereditary property in man — I did not start the question whether in the event of a servile insurrection and war, Congress would not have complete, unlimited control over the whole subject of slavery even to the emancipation of all the slaves in the State where such insurrection should break out, and for the suppression of which the freemen of Plymouth and Norfolk counties, Massachusetts, should be called by acts of Congress to pour out their treasures and to shed their blood. Had I spoken

my mind on those two points the sturdiest of the abolitionists would have disavowed the sentiments of their champion.'

"A little more than seven weeks after thus writing, Mr. Adams made the following entries in his diary:—

"*May 25th.* — 'At the House, the motion of Robertson, to recommit Pinckney's slavery report, with instructions to report a resolution declaring that Congress has no constitutional authority to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, as an amendment to the motion for printing an extra number of the report, was first considered. Robertson finished his speech, which was vehement. . . .

"Immediately after the conclusion of Robertson's speech I addressed the Speaker, but he gave the floor to Owens, of Georgia, one of the signing members of the committee, who moved the previous question, and refused to withdraw it. It was seconded and carried, by yeas and nays. . . .

"The hour of one came, and the order of the day was called—a joint resolution from the Senate, authorizing the President to cause rations to be furnished to suffering fugitives from Indian hostilities in Alabama and Georgia. Committee of the whole on the Union, and a debate of five hours, in which I made a speech of about an hour, wherein I opened the whole subject of the Mexican, Indian, Negro, and English war.'

"It was in the course of this speech that Mr. Adams first enunciated the principle of emancipation through martial law, in force, under the Constitution, in time of war. He did so in the following passage:—

"Mr. Chairman, are you ready for all these wars? A Mexican war? A war with Great Britain if not with France? A general Indian war? A servile war? And, as an inevitable consequence of them all, a civil war? For it must ultimately terminate in a war of colors as well as of races. And do you imagine that, while with your eyes open you are wilfully kindling, and then closing your eyes and blindly rushing into them; do you imagine that while in the very nature of things, your own Southern and Southwestern States must be the Flanders of these complicated wars, the battlefield on which the last great battle must be fought between slavery and emancipation; do you imagine that your Congress will have no constitutional authority to interfere with the institution of slavery *in any way* in the States of this Confederacy? Sir, they must and will interfere with it—perhaps to sustain it by war; perhaps to abolish it by treaties of peace; and they will not only pos-



sess the constitutional power so to interfere, but they will be bound in duty to do it by the express provisions of the Constitution itself. From the instant that your slave-holding States become the theatre of war, civil, servile, or foreign, from that instant the war powers of Congress extend to interference with the institution of slavery in every way in which it can be interfered with, from a claim of indemnity for slaves taken or destroyed, to the cession of the State burdened with slavery to a foreign power.'

"The following references to this speech are then found in the diary:—

"*May 29th.* — 'I was occupied all the leisure of the day and evening in writing out for publication my speech made last Wednesday in the House of Representatives — one of the most hazardous that I ever made, and the reception of which, even by the people of my own District and State, is altogether uncertain.'

"*June 2d.* — 'My speech on the distribution of rations to the fugitives from Indian hostilities in Alabama and Georgia was published in the National Intelligencer of this morning, and a subscription paper was circulated in the House for printing it in a pamphlet, for which Gales told me there were twenty-five hundred copies ordered. Several members of the House of both parties spoke of it to me, some with strong dissent.'

"*June 19th.* — 'My speech on the rations comes back with echoes of thundering vituperation from the South and West, and with one universal shout of applause from the North and East. This is a cause upon which I am entering at the last stage of life, and with the certainty that I cannot advance in it far; my career must close, leaving the cause at the threshold. To open the way for others is all that I can do. The cause is good and great.'

"So far as the record goes, the doctrine was not again propounded by Mr. Adams until 1841. On the 7th of June of that year he made a speech in the House of Representatives in support of a motion for the repeal of the twenty-first rule of the House, commonly known as 'the Atherton Gag.' Of this speech no report exists, but in the course of it he again enunciated the martial law theory of emancipation. The next day he was followed in debate by C. J. Ingersoll, of Pennsylvania, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, who took occasion to declare that what he had heard the day previous had made his 'blood curdle with horror': —

“‘Mr. Adams here rose in explanation, and said he did not say that in the event of a servile war of insurrection of slaves, the Constitution of the United States would be at an end. What he did say was this, that in the event of a servile war or insurrection of slaves, if the people of the free States were called upon to suppress the insurrection, and to spend their blood and treasure in putting an end to the war — a war in which the distinguished Virginian, the author of the Declaration of Independence, had said that “God has no attribute in favor of the master” — then he would not say that Congress might not interfere with the institution of slavery in the States, and that, through the *treaty-making power*, universal emancipation might not be the result.’

“The following year the contention was again discussed in the course of the memorable debate on the ‘Haverhill Petition.’ Mr. Adams was then bitterly assailed by Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, and Thomas F. Marshall, of Kentucky. Mr. Adams at the time did not reply to them on this head; but, on the 14th of the following April, occasion offered, and he then once more laid down the law on the subject, as he understood it, and as it was subsequently put in force: —

“‘I would leave that institution to the exclusive consideration and management of the States more peculiarly interested in it, just as long as they can keep within their own bounds. So far I admit that Congress has no power to meddle with it. As long as they do not step out of their own bounds, and do not put the question to the people of the United States, whose peace, welfare and happiness are all at stake, so long I will agree to leave them to themselves. But when a member from a free State brings forward certain resolutions, for which, instead of reasoning to disprove his positions, you vote a censure upon him, and that without hearing, it is quite another affair. At the time this was done I said that, as far as I could understand the resolutions proposed by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. Giddings], there were some of them for which I was ready to vote, and some which I must vote against; and I will now tell this House, my constituents, and the world of mankind, that the resolution against which I should have voted was that in which he declares that what are called the slave States have the exclusive right of consultation on the subject of slavery. For that resolution I never would vote, because I believe that it is not just, and does not contain constitutional doctrine. I believe that so long as the slave States are able to sustain their institutions without going abroad or calling upon other parts of the Union to aid them or act on the subject, so long I will consent never to interfere.

“‘I have said this, and I repeat it; but if they come to the free States



and say to them you must help us to keep down our slaves, you must aid us in an insurrection and a civil war, then I say that with that call comes a full and plenary power to this House and to the Senate over the whole subject. It is a war power. I say it is a war power, and when your country is actually in war, whether it be a war of invasion or a war of insurrection, Congress has power to carry on the war, and must carry it on according to the laws of war; and by the laws of war an invaded country has all its laws and municipal institutions swept by the board, and martial law takes the place of them. This power in Congress has, perhaps, never been called into exercise under the present Constitution of the United States. But when the laws of war are in force, what, I ask, is one of those laws? It is this: that when a country is invaded, and two hostile armies are set in martial array, the commanders of both armies have power to emancipate all the slaves in the invaded territory. Nor is this a mere theoretic statement. The history of South America shows that the doctrine has been carried into practical execution within the last thirty years. Slavery was abolished in Colombia, first, by the Spanish General, Morillo, and, secondly, by the American General, Bolivar. It was abolished by virtue of a military command given at the head of the army, and its abolition continues to be law to this day. It was abolished by the laws of war, and not by municipal enactments; the power was exercised by military commanders, under instructions, of course, from their respective Governments. And here I recur again to the example of General Jackson. What are you now about in Congress? You are passing a grant to refund to General Jackson the amount of a certain fine imposed upon him by a Judge under the laws of the State of Louisiana. You are going to refund him the money, with interest; and this you are going to do because the imposition of the fine was unjust. And why was it unjust? Because General Jackson was acting under the laws of war, and because the moment you place a military commander in a district which is the theatre of war, the laws of war apply to that district. . . .

“ ‘I might furnish a thousand proofs to show that the pretensions of gentlemen to the sanctity of their municipal institutions under a state of actual invasion and of actual war, whether servile, civil, or foreign, is wholly unfounded, and that the laws of war do, in all such cases, take the precedence. I lay this down as the law of nations. I say that the military authority takes for the time the place of all municipal institutions, and slavery among the rest; and that, under that state of things, so far from its being true that the States where slavery exists have the exclusive management of the subject, not only the President of the United States but the commander of the army has power to order the universal emancipation of the slaves. I have given here more in detail a principle which I have asserted on this floor before now, and of which

I have no more doubt than that you, Sir, occupy that Chair. I give it in its development, in order that any gentleman from any part of the Union may, if he thinks proper, deny the truth of the position, and may maintain his denial; not by indignation, not by passion and fury, but by sound and sober reasoning from the laws of nations and the laws of war. And if my position can be answered and refuted, I shall receive the refutation with pleasure; I shall be glad to listen to reason, aside, as I say, from indignation and passion. And if, by the force of reasoning, my understanding can be convinced, I here pledge myself to recant what I have asserted.

“‘Let my position be answered; let me be told, let my constituents be told, the people of my State be told, — a State whose soil tolerates not the foot of a slave, — that they are bound by the Constitution to a long and toilsome march under burning summer suns and a deadly Southern clime for the suppression of a servile war; that they are bound to leave their bodies to rot upon the sands of Carolina, to leave their wives and their children orphans; that those who cannot march are bound to pour out their treasures while their sons or brothers are pouring out their blood to suppress a servile, combined with a civil or a foreign war, and yet that there exists no power beyond the limits of the slave State where such war is raging to emancipate the slaves. I say, let this be proved — I am open to conviction; but till that conviction comes I put it forth not as a dictate of feeling, but as a settled maxim of the laws of nations, that in such a case the military supersedes the civil power.’

“With one exception, the only comment on this utterance made by Mr. Adams in his diary was the following: ‘My speech of this day stung the slaveocracy to madness.’

“Mr. Adams does not seem to have referred to the subject again on the floor of the House of Representatives, nor is any allusion to it found in his subsequent published utterances. His enunciation of the principle, however, was not forgotten. The Civil War broke out exactly nineteen years from the time (April, 1842) that Mr. Adams delivered in the House of Representatives the speech from which the last of the foregoing extracts was taken. During the first year of the war, on the 30th of August, 1861, Major-General John C. Frémont, then in command of the Military Department of the West, issued a proclamation in which, among other things, was the following — the slaves ‘of all persons in the State of Missouri, who shall take up arms against the United States . . . are hereby declared free men.’ This proclamation, afterwards revoked by



President Lincoln, immediately attracted much notice, and was widely discussed. The New York 'Tribune,' in its issue of September 1, 1861, contained an editorial entitled 'John Quincy Adams on Slavery Emancipation as Affected by War,' in which the principles laid down in the speech of 1842 were quoted, and applied to the action of General Frémont. The article was very generally reprinted, and the record further examined. Subsequently, Charles Sumner made full use of the material thus collected in a speech delivered before the Republican State Convention, at Worcester, Massachusetts, October 1, 1861.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sumner then said: 'No attempt to answer [Mr. Adams] was ever made. . . . Meanwhile his words have stood as a towering landmark and beacon.' Finally, Mr. William Whiting, of Boston, then Solicitor of the War Department, incorporated (pp. 77-82) nearly all the extracts used by Mr. Sumner, in a pamphlet entitled 'The War Powers of the President,' published by him during the summer of 1862, some months before the issuance of Lincoln's preliminary proclamation of the 22d of the following September."

So much for the record on this subject heretofore published. I now turn to the "Memoirs," and the unpublished files at Quincy. The "Memoirs" seem to indicate that this question first occupied the attention of Mr. Adams sixteen years before delivering his speech of April, 1836, in the House of Representatives, and in connection with the famous discussion which led to the so-called Missouri Compromise of 1820.

*December 27, 1819.* " . . . His [Jefferson's] Declaration of Independence is an abridged Alcoran of political doctrine, laying open the first foundations of civil society; but he does not appear to have been aware that it also laid open a precipice into which the slave-holding planters of his country sooner or later must fall. . . . The seeds of the Declaration of Independence are yet maturing. The harvest will be what West, the painter calls the terrible sublime."

Mr. Adams at that time was Secretary of State in the first Monroe administration, in which John C. Calhoun also served as head of the War Department. The question of slavery then first presented itself as a sectional issue, and was the subject of angry debate.

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. vi. pp. 19-23; also vol. vii. p. 142.

*January 10, 1820.* "The Missouri question has taken such hold of my feelings and imagination that, finding my ideas connected with it very numerous, but confused for want of arrangement, I have within these few days begun to commit them to paper loosely as they arise in my mind. There are views of the subject which have not yet been taken by any of the speakers or writers by whom it has been discussed — views which the time has not yet arrived for presenting to the public, but which in all probability it will be necessary to present hereafter. I take it for granted that the present question is a mere preamble — a titlepage to a great tragic volume. I have hitherto reserved my opinions upon it, as it has been obviously proper for me to do. The time may, and I think will, come when it will be my duty equally clear to give my opinion, and it is even now proper for me to begin the preparation of myself for that emergency. The President thinks this question will be winked away by a compromise. But so do not I. Much am I mistaken if it is not destined to survive his political and individual life and mine."

The following conversation is recorded as having at this time taken place between Mr. Adams and Mr. Calhoun: —

*February 24, 1820.* "I had some conversation with Calhoun on the slave question pending in Congress. He said he did not think it would produce a dissolution of the Union, but, if it should, the South would be from necessity compelled to form an alliance, offensive and defensive, with Great Britain.

"I said that would be returning to the colonial state.

"He said, yes, pretty much, but it would be forced upon them. . . . I pressed the conversation no further; but if the dissolution of the Union should result from the slave question, it is as obvious as anything that can be foreseen of futurity, that it must shortly afterwards be followed by the universal emancipation of the slaves. . . . Slavery is the great and foul stain upon the North American Union, and it is a contemplation worthy of the most exalted soul whether its total abolition is or is not practicable: if practicable, by what means it may be effected, and if a choice of means be within the scope of the object, what means would accomplish it at the smallest cost of human sufferance. A dissolution, at least temporary, of the Union, as now constituted, would be certainly necessary, and the dissolution must be upon a point involving the question of slavery, and no other. The Union might then be reorganized on the fundamental principle of emancipation. This object is vast in its compass, awful in its prospects, sublime and beautiful in its issue. A life devoted to it would be nobly spent or sacrificed."

*November 29, 1820.* "If slavery be the destined sword in the hand of the destroying angel which is to sever the ties of this Union, the



same sword will cut in sunder the bonds of slavery itself. A dissolution of the Union for the cause of slavery would be followed by a servile war in the slave-holding States, combined with a war between the two severed portions of the Union. It seems to me that its result must be the extirpation of slavery from this whole continent; and, calamitous and desolating as this course of events in its progress must be, so glorious would be its final issue, that, as God shall judge me, I dare not say that it is not to be desired."

These utterances were certainly prophetic. An interval of sixteen years ensued during which the issue was quiescent. In the meantime Mr. Adams had served one presidential term, and in 1831 had been elected to the House of Representatives from the "Plymouth" district. The question then came again to the front, destined to occupy the attention of the country for the next thirty years.

*December 13, 1838.* "The conflict between the principle of liberty and the fact of slavery is coming gradually to an issue. Slavery has now the power, and falls into convulsions at the approach of freedom. That the fall of slavery is predetermined in the counsels of Omnipotence I cannot doubt; it is a part of the great moral improvement in the condition of man, attested by all the records of history. But the conflict will be terrible, and the progress of improvement perhaps retrograde before its final progress to consummation."

The mind of Mr. Adams seems at once to have reverted to the conclusions reached by him in 1820; and those conclusions he set forth in the speech of May 25, 1836. The following passages in the "Memoirs" relate to that speech:—

*March 3, 1842.* "Mr. Giddings came to enquire the precise extent to which I hold the subject of slavery in the States subject to the jurisdiction of the National Government; and I explained it to him. In the case of a servile war, involving the free States of the Union, the question of emancipation would necessarily be the issue of the conflict. All war must end in peace, and peace must be concluded by treaty. Of such a treaty, partial or universal emancipation would probably form an essential, and the power of the President and Senate of the United States over it would be coextensive with the war."

*April 17, 1842.* "I had called yesterday at the National Intelligencer office, and asked Mr. Gales to send me the slips of my speech of yesterday to be published to-morrow, for my revisal. He sent them this evening—seven columns of small print, reported by Stansbury. I em-

ployed two hours in revising them, and found very few and slight corrections to make. This speech was made under deep and solemn conviction of duty. Its issues are with the Father of spirits. I must abide by its consequences. May they be auspicious to the peace of my country and to human freedom !”

The following extracts from the correspondence also relate to the speech : —

PLYMOUTH, MASS., May 7, 1836.

DEAR SIR, — . . . As to the opinion of your constituents upon the subject of Slavery, I should think a very large majority of them are opposed to it, many of whom, however, disapprove of the measures of the Anti Slavery party, of which number I do not hesitate to say I am. — Some of your friends in this District are very much interested in behalf of the slave, and would have them all free, regardless of consequences. — Our town, with a single exception, has been free from any mob spirit, and it has been a great relief to the orderly portion of our inhabitants that the Anti Slavery Lecturers, have kept from us, public opinion in our town is decidedly against the incendiary movements of the fanatical part of the Abolition party. — . . .

And remain, with very great respect,

S. SAMPSON.

To this letter from a constituent Mr. Adams replied as follows : —

S. SAMPSON Esq<sup>r</sup> Collector of the Customs — Plymouth — Mass<sup>ts</sup>

WASHINGTON 21 May 1836.

DEAR SIR, — . . . This subject of Slavery, which is gradually and irresistibly absorbing all others in the deliberations of Congress, is, as you know one of extreme delicacy with reference to the Union of these States, and the complicated System of our National and State Governments. My own opinions upon the subject are those of a native of the Commonwealth whose children take pride in the recollection that in the first Census of the People taken under the Constitution of the United States, she stood alone in the return of the word “none” upon the column under the head of “Slaves.” I hold Slavery in utter abhorrence, and look forward to the time when it shall vanish from the face of the Earth, as one of the great stages in the improvement of the condition of man upon this terraqueous globe.

But in the political Constitution of this Union, I am under *Bonds*. The People of the *free* States (by which I here mean the States without Slaves) have formed a federal compact with those in which Slavery forms a part of their political system, and of the social condition of their inhabitants. The terms of this compact I take to be that so far



as Slavery is an institution of internal and domestic policy, the *free* and the *Slave* States shall be respectively left by each other, to manage their own affairs in their own way. That Slavery, and all that code of Laws by which it is established and maintained shall be left exclusively to the regulation of the States themselves in their separate and independent capacities. That with the legislation of the Slave States upon these subjects, so far as it relates to internal and domestic policy, without encroaching upon the rights of the free States or of their People, the free States shall not interfere.

And the people of the free States have in the national compact gone further. They have not recognized Slavery, as a *lawful* condition in the relations between men. They have not acknowledged Slavery, as an element of the common Constitution. They have studiously, and it might almost be said affectedly, avoided the use of the word, even while making provision for the thing. But in the spirit of concession to the Slave holding States they did stipulate, first that the Slave-holders should be allowed a representation in the national Legislature for their Slaves, under the whimsical denomination of all "other persons," and secondly that they would allow no refuge within their borders to the fugitive Slave, now described as a "person held to service, or labour" — but would deliver up such person, on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due.

And further the free States have concurred with the Slave holding States in giving to Congress the power to provide for calling forth the militia to *suppress insurrection* and in making it their duty to protect each of the Slave-holding States (on the application of its Legislature, or of its executive, when the Legislature cannot be convened) against *domestic violence*.

We are therefore bound by the national compact not only to abstain from all measures, the tendency of which would be to provoke insurrection among the Slaves but to give all our aid and exertions to suppress insurrection if it should break out. I cannot approve therefore of the Anti Slavery Societies nor of the movements of the Abolitionists urging legislative action for the suppression of Slavery. Nor can I vote for, or support the prayer of any petition for the abolition of Slavery or the Slave trade in the District of Columbia at this time.

But on the other hand I cannot subscribe to the doctrine, that the power to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, does not include the power to abolish Slavery. On the contrary I hold as firmly to the opinion that it does include the power, as I do to the belief that there is a ruler of the Universe, and that I am accountable to him for my opinions as well as of my actions. They are articles of the same faith, and in my mind and heart are indissolubly together. Nor can I give my assent to a great portion of the report of the select Commit-

tee, to whom the Abolition Petitions were referred, and a copy of which I will send you with this letter. I dissent from each and every one of their resolutions, the first and second of which they were instructed by the House to report; against which instructions I recorded my vote. Their third resolution they were not instructed to report and it is still more exceptionable than the first two, because it strikes directly at the Constitutional right of Petition, and at the freedom of debate in the House. I have thought it proper thus candidly to avow to you my opinions upon this subject — first as to one of my constituents holding as I believe sentiments personally friendly to me; and secondly as to an officer of the Government under the present Administration, bound in duty to its support; and perhaps approving more than I am able to do, its measures and its general policy. I shall probably express some of these opinions in the House before the close of the present Session, as well as upon other subjects, if possible still more momentous and upon which my views are more adverse to those of the present Administration, even, than they are to the question upon Slavery and the Slave trade which this report has brought up for discussion. I allude to the Mexican war with which we are threatened, and to the Indian and Negro war, already raging within our borders. . . .

The following is from a letter addressed to Mr. Adams by Benjamin Lundy, the well-known emancipator, whose property was, two years later, destroyed by the pro-slavery mob that fired Pennsylvania Hall, Philadelphia: —

PHILADELPHIA, 5th Mo. 27th, 1836.

ESTEEMED FRIEND: — . . . I percieve the “ice is broken” in the House of Representatives. Perseverance, *perseverance*, my friend!

Again, I am in great haste —

Most Respectfully Thine, &c.,

Hon. J. Q. ADAMS.

B. LUNDY.

To this Mr. Adams replied, referring to the speech of May 25: —

WASHINGTON, 2 June, 1836.

MY FRIEND BENJAMIN LUNDY — Philadelphia.

. . . Yes — “The ice is broken,” in the House of Representatives; and you will see in the National Intelligencer of this day, *how*, I have been obliged to break it. I have not yet been able to obtain permission from the House to offer the two Resolutions, calling for information from the President, relating to our affairs with Mexico, nor even to assign the reasons for my vote on the Slavish Resolutions of the Slavery Committee. But I have taken the occasion of another measure to throw out some reflections on both those subjects as well as upon our



Indian War, which I hope may lead our countrymen to think of them seriously. The speech will be printed in a pamphlet, and I will send you a copy of it. . . .

The following letters and replies relate to the same speech :

BORDENTOWN, May 30, 1836.

DEAR SIR, — I trust that you will soon give us, *in extenso*, — as if it were a full, written discourse — your late speech relating to the Texian question. On this head, our countrymen — including those of the middle and northern States — seem to need authoritative lessons of morality and policy. I have been shocked at the profligate sentiments and dispositions which have been so generally displayed, and regard them altogether as more ominous for the Union and the American character, than anything which has occurred. . . .

ROBERT WALSH.

WASHINGTON, 3 June, 1836.

ROBERT WALSH Esq<sup>r</sup>, Bordentown, N. J.

DEAR SIR, — Your Letters of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> ultimo have been duly received. My speech on the resolution for issuing rations to the fugitives from Indian Hostilities in Alabama and Georgia, made on the 25<sup>th</sup> ultimo was published in the National Intelligencer yesterday, and will be printed in a pamphlet. The absurd rules of the House of Representatives, construed as they are by a slave-holding Speaker sustained by a presidential electioneering majority, seal the lips of every member of the House, when the Speaker and majority so please, *upon the subject really before the House*, and give unbounded license in Committee of the Whole, to say anything, upon any subject, be the question before the Committee what it may. On the morning upon which my speech was made, the Gag — that is, the Previous Question had been applied to three Resolutions on Slavery, reported by a Committee on the Abolition Petitions — The first of these Resolutions was

“That Congress possess no Constitutional authority, *to interfere in any way*, with the institution of Slavery in any of the States of this Union.”

I had voted, with only eight other members of the House, against this resolution, and as the sturdiest of the Abolition Petitions had not denied this position, but it had been *admitted* by them all, and as I knew my vote, without argument, would startle multitudes of my own constituents, I asked of the House only five minutes of time to give my reasons for my vote, and had been denied. I had twice asked permission of the House to offer two resolutions calling for information respecting the state of our affairs with Mexico — and had been denied.

The second time, by a minority of the House, because it requires a majority of two thirds to suspend the Rules.

I was therefore compelled to make the Resolution for distributing rations to the fugitives from Indian revenge in Alabama and Georgia, the text for a commentary on Mexico, Texas, Indian Wars and Treaties, and Slavery ; and to compress into one speech matter redundant for three or four. It was accordingly desultory, and rendered more so by the perpetual interruptions against which I was obliged to make my way. My opinions on the whole subject presented views so different from those of any one here, that I scarcely knew how they would be received by any party. On the Mexican subject I was much aided by the information that I had gathered from the papers of Columbus in the *National Gazette*. On the resolution that Congress possess no constitutional power to interfere *in any way*, with the institution of Slavery, in any of the States of this Confederacy, my positions will be as unexpected to the public as they were to the House. Yet there is no principle of which I feel more confident. No one has yet contested my argument on that point, in the House, and Mr. Wise who represents the District including Southampton, in Virginia, and who refused to vote on the Resolution, because he denied the right of Congress to pass any Resolution at all upon the subject, distinctly admitted in answering me, that Congress have the constitutional right to interfere, in the Institution of Slavery in the States, *for its support*. The right of interference, in every way, in the case of war, appears to me so clear that I know not how it can be contested. The greatest excitement apparent in the House was on the charges against the policy of the present Administration towards the Indians and particularly against Georgia and Alabama. Feeble answers were attempted at the time, by members from the two States, as well as by Mr. Thompson of South Carolina ; and I have private [intimations] from several of them, that they *intend* to justify their policy, and that of the present Administration, beyond the power of reply.

What the public opinion of the North will be upon my speech, is altogether uncertain in my own estimation. Land jobbing and President jobbing have so perverted the mind and heart of a large portion of our People, and they work so insidiously upon the feelings and conduct of the whole mass, that truth finds an ear as unwilling in the primary assemblies as in the Halls of the Capitol. For the last twelve months the subserviency of the North to Southern Slavery has been so obsequious and sycophantic, that I am sometimes constrained to doubt whether I was born among a Nation of Freemen. These ebullitions of Texian enthusiasm have all the appearance to me of Fraud playing upon the wires of Frenzy. And who could have believed that it is the Democracy of New York and Pennsylvania, that is running in the front ranks [of] this recreant race of servility? . . .



ANDALUSIA, [PENN.,] June 5, 1836.

MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot deny myself the pleasure of thanking you for the high gratification which I received last evening from reading your speech in the Natl Intelligencer. The most uncomfortable symptom of the strange distemper which afflicts the country, is the conduct of some of our public men, who seem to vibrate perpetually between two panic fears—the dread of offending the Executive, and the terror of the populace. While many of them are overawed by the presence and the patronage of persons in office, there are others subdued by an anxiety scarcely less servile, about the newspapers and the rabble. Between them, the voice of manliness and independence has little chance of being heard. It was therefore with singular satisfaction that I felt it break forth, so fully, distinctly and powerfully, in a tone the more grateful, because always associated with delightful recollections. Our people seem to be running wild with all sorts of infatuation, and never required more than now to be rebuked into sobriety. I pray you not to renounce that very necessary, tho' irksome function which no one can perform so successfully as yourself, and to let us enjoy frequent manifestations of that intellect which cannot be repressed, and will not be suppressed.

Present my best respects to Mrs. Adams, and believe me always

With great regard

N. BIDDLE.

Hon<sup>ble</sup> JOHN Q. ADAMS, Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON, 10 June, 1836.

NICHOLAS BIDDLE Esq<sup>r</sup> Philadelphia.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your Letter of the 5<sup>th</sup> inst<sup>t</sup> comes equally cheering and seasonable. “Facit indignatio versum”—My Speech was extorted from me by the foolery of the three Resolutions reported by the Slavery Committee and the cormorant appetite with which the House had swallowed them. It is remarkable that although I have been attacked in the House with the bitterest virulence, for my commentary on the tender mercies of Georgia towards the Indians and for my prediction that if we take Texas, John Bull will take Cuba, not one word has been said in reply to my assertion that as incidental to the War power, Congress must in the event of a war in any of the slave-holding States, possess the authority to interfere *in every way* with the institution of Slavery, in the State within which the war would exist. I have not found a man hardy enough to deny the position. The speech as printed in the Intelligencer makes me say that I do not admit that even the Peace Powers of Congress give them authority to interfere *in any way*, with Slavery in the States. I said directly the reverse. I said I did not admit that Congress possess *no* authority to

interfere with Slavery, *in any way* — even among the Peace Powers. They have at least the power to interfere with Slavery, in the way of supporting it.

I feel myself strengthened in confidence of the correctness of my own opinions by the concurrence of yours; and I am encouraged by your exhortation to continue my endeavours to open the eyes of our country to the precipice before them. Upon this subject however I need the curb rather than the spur. My course in the House of Representatives has put me to the ban of *all* the Presidential parties, and made me obnoxious to all the Sectional rapacity of the South and the West. The Whigs in both Houses, and the senatorial party in their controversies with the President, consummated their own ruin, by the false position which they took in the dispute with France, and the wanton attack upon the House of Representatives on the closing night of the last Congress, so strangely renewed by Mr. Webster in his Speech to the Senate on the 14 of last January. Assailed as I was indirectly in that speech, it was impossible for me to remain silent, and it was equally impossible for me to speak without blasting the last hope of his supporters for the presidential succession. These constituted perhaps a majority of the people of my own State, and accordingly he and his partizans have undertaken to demolish me in my own District, where they have already given notice of their intention to contest my reelection to the next Congress. On the other hand, my influence and my vote excluded David Newland from the House of Representatives, and thereby lost to a certainty the vote of North Carolina to Mr. Van Buren, if the election should come into the House. This of course lost me all possible favour with the Van Burenites, and my disclosure of the purpose to plunge us into a war with Mexico for the conquest of Texas and the restoration of Slavery has irretrievably ruined me with the Jacksonites.

I have received intimations from some of the dearest personal friends that I have upon earth, that I have undertaken more than, in the present condition of our country, it is possible for man to perform. That we *must* be governed by parties, and that every party *must* have a head. That all political conduct must be accommodated to the main object of party pursuits, and that to bid defiance one day to one presidential Candidate, and the next day to his competitor is mere political Quixotism, — sallying forth in search of Giants, and coming in conflict with every Windmill. To these kind and friendly warnings I scarcely know what to reply, but that having deliberately fixed my purpose of making this experiment upon the virtue and intelligence of the People, and having persevered in it through good and evil Fortune, it is too late for me to depart from it now. I have made moral principle, and not party or selfish purpose the standard of my conduct throughout my



political life, and there is too little of the stake left that I can lose for me now to turn round and become a mere partizan.

We are drawing towards the close of the Session. Slavery, and the presidential succession are the Azote and the Oxygen of our atmospheric air. In them we live and move and have our being. There is some danger that even before Congress rises we shall recognize Texas as a Sovereign and Independent State. And by their next meeting there is equal probability that there will be ready for the consideration of the Senate a treaty for the annexation of Texas to this Union, and if I may rely upon information which ought to be correct, Mexico is ready for a very moderate indemnity to sanction this dismemberment of her domain, and to acquiesce in this Revolution. It has been breeding and maturing through the whole course of this Administration, and the utter impotence, political and military, of the Mexican Confederacy, signalized by the, [as] yet unaccountable, but too well authenticated defeat and capture of Santa Anna, present an ungracious probability that the project will be consummated even before the change of dynasty from the Tennessean Hero to the Northern Man with Southern principles. This acquisition of Texas, indissolubly connected as it is with the issue now making up between Slavery and Emancipation, forms a subject of contemplation too colossal for the grasp of my understanding! Is the whole Continent of North America, to constitute one Confederation, or one Military Monarchy? Has Mexico been emancipated from Spain, only to be conquered by the Anglo Saxon race of *our* Union? This overflowing of our population into Texas, with the express design of breaking it off from Mexico, and annexing it to the Northern Confederacy under the law of perpetual Slavery, has an ominous aspect upon our futurity, and the facility with which it will prove that Mexico may be stripp'd of her Territories, — where will it end? I am afraid of trusting my own speculations and must wait for a few more facts — Give me your thoughts. . . .

The following was addressed to Dr. George Parkman, of Boston, a life-long political friend of Mr. Adams, whose murder, by Prof. John W. Webster, of Harvard University, in November, 1849, led to one of the most memorable trials in American criminal annals.

WASHINGTON, 22 June, 1836.

DR. GEORGE PARKMAN, New York.

MY DEAR SIR, — I enclose in a packet with this Letter twelve copies of my Speech upon the distribution of rations to the sufferers by Indian hostilities in Alabama and Georgia, conformably to the request in your favour of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst<sup>d</sup>.

I would that the sentiment of compassion and sympathy for that

hapless race of native Americans, which we are exterminating with such merciless and perfidious cruelty, extorted from me on that occasion, could contribute even a mite to alleviate or avert their fate.

Accept once more the assurance of my warmest wishes, and prayers that your European tour may be prosperous and profitable to yourself and to all your family; and that in due time you may all with equal satisfaction return to your Country and to your friends. Among whom I hope you will not cease to consider as ever faithfully

Yours —

The following, from one of the abolitionists of the day, is not without interest as shedding light on the conditions then prevailing in the free States: —

PHILADELPHIA: 5<sup>th</sup> mo: 29<sup>th</sup> 1836.

ESTEEMED FRIEND, — I would not occupy thy important time by the perusal of a solitary line from my pen, were it not that I hold thee richly entitled to the thanks of every friend of humanity, for the bold and noble stand thou hast made, in relation to the affairs of Texas. I rejoice that thy eyes have been opened, so as to discern that the hand of Providence *may* clearly be seen, as the director of the movements of the despised, grossly traduced, vilified, and persecuted, friends of Human Rights and eternal *Righteous Union*, the Abolitionists of the country.

Thro' our instrumentality facts have been noted and preserved relative to the wicked objects and intentions of the slave-holding and slave-trading Section of our Nation, which would otherwise have kept from view their base and detestable machinations for the purpose of eternizing the curse of Slavery upon us.

I trust thou hast discovered that no time should be lost in proclaiming the whole truth upon the housetops, that our Northern brethren may *feel* their own danger and save themselves from speedy ruin.

It is useless for me to draw a picture of the necessary events which would follow the introduction of Texas into this Union, under its present auspices, and the acknowledged designs of the instigators of the present revolt. Thy long intimacy with the institutions of our government, and the bearing of political movements upon its ultimate welfare, render it entirely supererogatory. Thy experience, knowledge and wisdom, will easily conceive a full-length likeness of the Angel of Judgment and Justice (the day of mercy having passed by) whose phial of Retribution is ready to be poured out upon this guilty Nation, whose measure I believe will be full, if Texas is added as a Slave Section.

Nothing but the real, permanent prosperity of my Country, which I love with all her faults, would have induced me to brave the obloquy, abuse, &c. which has awaited the little band who were coadjutors with me in rending the vail which covered the deformities of republican



despotism, and in unmasking the monster which was about to plant his iron hoof upon the neck of the Genius of Liberty, who had, under God, led our Fathers thro' the dark valley of the Shadow of death, in the revolutionary Struggle, and placed their feet upon the rock of deliverance from Tyranny and oppression.

Excuse me, my dear friend, for I love the very Sound of Liberty, and I hope that for the remainder of thy life, which is not likely to be very long, thou wilt unflinchingly sustain her broad principles, and defend her glorious Temple, so that at the end of thy course thou mayst leave an enduring monument in the hearts of her children, and be welcomed among the Spirits of the *just made perfect*.

As ever thy friend

EDWIN P. ATLEE, M. D.

J. Q. ADAMS.

Nº 152 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St.

P. S. My best respects to W<sup>m</sup> Slade. I hope to see you both on your return home. — If any of thy speeches should be printed in pamphlet form, may I request a copy? E. P. A.

PHILADELPHIA : 6<sup>th</sup> mo : 16. 1836.

HIGHLY ESTEEMED FRIEND, — As coming events cast their Shadows before, and the whole chain of proceedings during this session of Congress have conclusively shown that the deep laid plot of engrafting the system of Slavery, not only on the descendants of Africa in the South, but upon the *freemen* of the North, was foreseen and predicted by the Antislavery body: and as every moment is now precious for the enlightenment of our fellow citizens, I have dared again to address thee, for the purpose of asking whether the deep interest thou art now actuated by, and the consequent *clear vision* thy enquiries have produced, would warrant thy appearance before the three Antislavery Societies of this City and County, as their Orator, for the ensuing 4<sup>th</sup> of July? — On the same day 1833, I first appeared before my fellow-citizens, in an address on the subject of Slavery, a copy of which I sent thee. The cause being one nearest to my heart, I publicly pledged myself to deliver a similar address every 4<sup>th</sup> of July as long as I lived, and mental and corporeal strength would admit, and as our Country was cursed by this foul stain.

The following Jan<sup>y</sup> I spoke again before the Female Society of this City. This address was also published, and a copy sent to thee.

A young attorney of excellent standing delivered an Oration on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 1834.

The state of excitement was so great last year that no person could be found courageous enough to come forward. Finding this to be the case, I had it announced that I should appear again. This address was

extemporaneous and without notes, and was delivered before a highly respectable audience, in the Musical Fund Hall. It was not published, altho' it gave great satisfaction to the auditory, among whom were several Slaveholders, who treated me with cordial attention after the meeting.

The coming 4<sup>th</sup> has no orator engaged, and as I do not wish to *impose* myself upon the public, and as even a distant *agent* or *member* of the Anti-Slavery Society would not probably be acceptable, just now, to the community, I do most heartily, on behalf of the Societies here, desire thou mayst grant the request. If more agreeable to thee to dwell upon Constitutional, inherent, individual rights &c — without bearing too heavily upon the *Sin of Slavery* we shall be entirely satisfied.

Please reply as soon as convenient, and confer an additional favor upon the Friends of Freedom, and thy sincere friend

E. P. ATLEE.

J. Q. ADAMS.

The following is the reply of Mr. Adams: —

WASHINGTON, 25 June, 1836.

FRIEND E. P. ATLEE — Philadelphia.

RESPECTED FRIEND, — I have lately received two letters from you in relation to the course which I have during the present session of Congress pursued on subjects connected with that part of our political condition which results from the existence of Slavery in our Confederate Republic — the most unfortunate, most perplexing and most alarming of all the elements of our civil and political Institutions. In the National Intelligencer of this morning you will find the Report of my part in the debate upon the Bill for the admission of the State of Arkansas into the Union, and I presume you will perceive on the one hand how far short my opinions on the subject of American Slavery fall of the standard which you believe to be that of the true faith, and on the other how very far my concurrence with your opinions transcends that which throughout the present Session has been the triumphant Standard of Slavery in the House of Representatives of the United States. You will see that the utmost extent to which I ventured to offer a proposition restrictive upon the overbearing influence of Slavery, was a proviso withholding the assent of Congress from that Article in the Constitution of the State of Arkansas which prohibits the Legislature itself from emancipating Slaves, without the consent of their owners. You will see that upon this proposition only 32 votes in its favour could be obtained in the Committee of the Whole to 90 votes against it. And as in the Committee of the Whole, the yeas and nays cannot be taken, so you will find that when my proposition



was renewed in the House, the yeas and nays were not allowed to be taken upon it there. They were cut off by the previous question, called for, in a manner unexampled, by a Slave-holding member — authorized, against the rules and usages of the House, by a Slave-holding Speaker, and sustained upon my appeal from his decision by a majority of ten votes. You will also see that of the 97 votes which thus sustained the decision of the Speaker five were given by members from Pennsylvania, and twenty by members from the State of New York. Had these votes been on the Liberty list, upon this question, the Speaker's decision would have been reversed by a vote of 112 to 72. Nineteen members from Pennsylvania and only eight from New York voted against the decision.

The effect of the Resolution of the House to lay upon the table without further notice, all petitions, memorials, propositions, or papers relating to Slavery, or the abolition of Slavery, was at once a suppression of the right of Petition, and an unconstitutional restriction upon the rights of the members of the House to offer Resolutions upon subjects of great public importance; and perfectly within the scope of deliberation in the House ever since the existence of the Government.

The effect of the decision of the Speaker was to deny to me the freedom of debate upon the subject immediately before the House, and to deprive me of the constitutional right of having the yeas and nays recorded upon the question of an amendment which I had offered to a Bill under consideration in the House.

Both these operations have been effected by the Representatives of Freemen, in their own States unsullied with the taint of Slavery — and above all by Representatives of the People of New York and Pennsylvania. The Representatives must be supposed to speak the voice of their constituents. It is a new feature in the character of the people of New York and Pennsylvania, to take the side of Slavery against Freedom: how long they will chuse to sustain this position in the affairs and opinions of the world, it is not for me to foretell.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is the day fixed upon for closing the present session of Congress. I shall, of course, be necessarily detained here until after that day. I would very cheerfully address the Anti Slavery Societies on that day, but, although concurring in their abstract opinions concerning Slavery, and lamenting the delusion, which especially for the last year, has infected the soil of Freedom itself with an unnatural and fanatical sympathy with Slavery, it would be of little avail that I should speak to the people of Pennsylvania, on their own Soil, while my voice is stifled by the will of their Representatives in the Legislative Hall of the Nation.

I believe that the final issue between Slavery and *Emancipation* (a word which I prefer to abolition,) is to be made up on this Continent of

North America. I would hope if I could that it will be made up peaceably, and settled without bloodshed — but it must come. It is approaching by such means as it is the special prerogative of Providence to employ. The Society of *Friends* are among the most effective instruments to the attainment of the end, because all their paths are Peace. Bound as I am by the compact in the Constitution of the United States, in my political capacity I have endeavoured to retard rather than to hasten the conflict between the parties which must ultimately be unavoidable. What I have done hitherto has been defensively to maintain my own rights, and the free institutions of the Country. I hope they will not perish in my hands — but the People themselves can alone effectually maintain them.

I am very respectfully your friend —

The following was from Josiah Quincy, Mr. Adams's lifelong friend, then President of Harvard College : —

CAMBRIDGE, [MASS.,] 13 June, 1836.

MY DEAR SIR, — You will not, I trust, deem it obtrusive if I take the liberty to express to you my thanks for the noble stand you have made against the projects which have for their intent the admission of Texas into the Union ; and also for the notice you have given of your determination to resist the extension of slavery to Arkansas.

I know not that any congressional exertion of this, or any former session, has been received, in this quarter with more general and heart-felt applause, than has been yours, relative to Texas. I suppose, however, the event is inevitable, as I take it for granted to be the policy of administration and the coincident interest of the slave States. Should it take place, I should deem it the deathblow to the Constitution had not that instrument already received so many wounds of that kind as to show that it possesses a mysterious vitality which sets calculation at defiance.

As to Slavery in the new States, I think that Northern men owe it to their own character, as well as to that of their country, to meet every attempt to extend the evil to new States with the most decided opposition. It is the only way in which they can manifest that the acquiescence they have shown in the continuance of slavery in the Union has been compelled by their respect to the relations and obligations of the Constitution. Let their acquiescence be limited by those obligations. Let every attempt to extend the iniquitous traffic in human beings, and to plant the evil in other states, be manfully and perseveringly resisted. . . .

JOSIAH QUINCY.

HON. JOHN Q. ADAMS.



CAMBRIDGE, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1836.

MY DEAR SIR, — Accept my thanks for an authenticated copy of your speech, which I received yesterday. I had read it per saltum, in the newspapers, but I was not contented with those scraps, which always smelt of the dish and the caterer. But what you have sent me is the whole head and pluck — heart, lungs, liver and lights, and I assure you I feasted on the savoury repast, but it had this difference from our ordinary meals — the more I swallowed the more I longed for, without feeling satiety; and digestion has gone on to entire satisfaction, and with no small delight. Even the rascally *Atlas* extols the speech, and to that degree that he felt the necessity of saying something impudent of the speaker, for his flying *alone* like an Eagle, instead of belonging to a flock, like a goose.

I have been not only much pleased with the noble effusion as an oration, but *instructed*, as a very first-rate political Lecture. I guess it must have expanded the mind of the President, and that of Mr Van Buren — so ready are people to judge others by themselves. I observed that some tried to stop you, by the disorderly cry of *order! order!*; and by that mean subterfuge of a coward “the previous question,” or something like it. I imagine, however that some of your hearers must have sat about as easy as a man on a wool-comber’s hatchel. I mean some of your South or South-western members, and who not wishing to retire were compelled to adopt the Indian philosophy of “*Grin and bear it*”; especially that portion of the philippic which regards the *Negroes*; for they know that black cloud will, sooner or later bust over their affrighted heads.

I had procured one of Mitchell’s large maps, and pored over it with the pleasing assiduity of Uncle Toby himself, but I have no Corporal Trim to imbibe and wonder at my knowledge of this Newfoundland of the United States.

When you speak of the Island of CUBA, I find myself *at home* with you. I spent five months there; and covered more pages of it than any Island I ever visited. There I first became acquainted with *Col. Miranda*, and renewed our acquaintance after he came to Boston. I used to tell him that Cuba belonged to us, for it was only one of our own Mountains, with its head out of water. I never viewed a country with such admiration. I never saw the wonders of vegetation except there. Plants, flowers and fruit, and rapid vegetation, surpassed everything I ever saw before, or since. Their rivulets and brooks exceeded in beauty anything I ever saw, forming a striking contrast with the very mean and degraded inhabitants. I coveted the harbour of Havana, as well as their glorious land and aromatic vegetables. I often whispered to several of my countrymen there that we must and ought to have *Cuba*. I have mentioned it in my Essay on *Junius*,

and called it the American Great Britain — the future capital or future metropolis of our new world — that the Spaniards were unworthy of it. What you have said of it has called up afresh the finest natural scenery I ever beheld.

We have got Continent enough. Perhaps too much. But I do wish that we owned the Summer Island, or Bermuda — merely as a naval station. Commodore Elliot assured me that he conversed largely with General Jackson on the importance of the *waters* — or *waterscape* of Charleston S. C., and its neighborhood as a naval station, in spite of their misunderstood bars, and shoals, and that in his nullification cruise, when he had the command by sea, and Gen<sup>l</sup> Scott by land, he corrected many false notions concerning their sea board, and communicated his ideas to President Jackson. I more than once touched the subject in my correspondence with Governor Levi Woodbury. The same officer gave him important information respecting Rhode Island and *Fall-river* as a connecting chain of defence with the outer harbour of Boston, via Quincy, or rather Cohasset by means of two or three fortified Posts.

Now if all this does not betray a man bitten with Uncle-Tobyism, I shall be glad to know it. It is remarkable the Spaniards, though they have the most gold and silver, are the poorest nation on earth, and the best and most costly, and most numerous, fortifications of stone, with the least energy for defending them. The Moro-castle, and indeed the whole range of their stone masonry which encircles the harbor of the Havanna looks like it; and so do the bays and harbours of Teneriffe, where I resided more than a month, not to mention the wonderful works at Ferrol.

Your speech is almost too long to be treated as Alderman Beckford's famous speech to George the Third was, in Guildhall, yet it deserves it more.

When do you expect to take off your harness, drop your traces and roll at Quincy? Will they let you come home by mowing time; but unless our dismal weather should change greatly, you may not be allowed "to make hay while the sun shines" for a cloud yet hangs over us. The People, and their *Magnates*, are busy in preparing to *play* Bunker-hill *battle*, when Alexander Everett is to say Grace. Accept the affectionate regards of

BENJ<sup>N</sup> WATERHOUSE.

6th mo 22<sup>nd</sup> 1836

EAST FALLOWFIELD, CHESTER CO. PENN<sup>A</sup>.

RESPECTED FRIEND, — Though, personally, entirely a stranger to thee, yet I cannot rest satisfied in my own mind without returning thee, in some method or form, on behalf of myself and a large and *increasing*



number of friends, of all *sects and parties*, our grateful thanks and acknowledgments, for thy late bold, fearless, and independant speech in Congress, relative to granting appropriations to relieve those who have, and still are, suffering from Indian depredations.

I have read it several times to companies of our friends who have listened to it with the most thrilling interest — thankful that we have at least *one* influential man who *dares* amidst persecution, threatened assassination, and calls to “*order*,” to expose to the faces of our *Southern Slavery Texas men*, their unholy, unrighteous designs and schemes; and the fearful, terrible situation in which our country is placed at this eventful crisis. Not only are we thankful, but we are grateful, for the noble stand thou hast taken, — inasmuch as the American press is in a great measure dumb, silent as the tomb; or bribed over to an unholy public sentiment, relative to this great subject, which involves in its issue all that is essential in human rights. I therefore hope and trust thou mayest be supported and encouraged to persevere, not only for the sake of millions of our enslaved fellows *now* in bondage, but because of the unbor[n] millions *yet* to live and linger out a life of servitude; and *because we ourselves* are threatened with subjugation to slaveholding encroachments; and therefore if *something* is not *done* to circumscribe, check, and totally eradicate this tremendous evil, it will eventually and at no distant day dig the grave of our liberties, and entomb the last hope of the friends of freedom throughout the world. By continuing thy exertion in the cause of human freedom thou wilt not only arouse our countrymen to a sense of their danger and rescue our country from destruction but thou wilt endear thyself to the christian world, to the great and good every where, and the *thousands* whose bosoms have beat a responsive “Amen” to thy late speech will be increased to *millions*, in whose hearts there will be erected a monument to JOHN QUINCY ADAMS more dureable than brass, and far, far more enviable.

Gladly would I write more (less I could not in justice to my own feelings) but I am feerful of occupying too much of thy valuable time and attention. I shall therefore close by assuring thee that our friends look with great interest and confidence to the course which thou hast, and mayest, take in future; as to one whome we have long honored, and admired, as a christian statesman and scholar.

Thou wilt greatly oblige me (if agreeable to thy pleasure) by sending a few coppies of thy speech to me, as there is a great anxiety in the community to see it. Any speeches of thine on any subject, and particularly relative to slavery, which is becoming the all engrossing question will be most thankfully received.

Most respectfully thy friend

JAMES FULTON JR.

JOHN Q. ADAMS, M. C.

P. S. Please assure *William Slade* of Vermont that his name is warmly cherished by us, and by every friend of man, for his noble exertions to rescue our prayers and petitions from being "nailed to the table," or "*the family vault of all the Capulets.*"

J. F. JR.

J. Q. A.

Mr. Adams, as is usual with public men, was at this time in constant receipt of letters of a threatening or abusive character. They have now not much historical value; but a single specimen may be worth preserving. It was written, and received more than two months after the adjournment of Congress, and while Mr. Adams was at Quincy.

GLASGOW, KENTUCKY, 12 Sept. 1836.

DR SIR, — I see in the latest news that your speech in Congress on the Texian War has been received in Mexico with acclamation universal, and that you are called the Demosthenes of America.

I am at a loss to conceive what kind of motives prompted you to degrade yourself so low as to make so inflamintory and anti-republican speech and manifest in such indubitable characteristics your detestation and abhorrence to a free Government. Your ungovernable ambitious propensity stripd you of your hypocritical mask last Autumn and ever sinc[e] you have been an object of scorn and ridicule to the American people. You have tried to palliate your heinous offences and cloke your abandoned degradation by sneaking into party enthusiasm but the different partes were not so far estranged from decency as you imagind you were hurled from their ranks with invideous contempt and you withered beneath their just and indignant wrath, and the oration under consideration shows clearly and obviouly the fallen condition into which you have precipitated yourself. You are not only a Hartford conventionist — a Blue Light Federalist — but an unprincipled and disorganised Abolitionist a declared enemy to the country which gave you birth and which you have stained by your lonesome and disconsate abandonment of principles which you formally held sacred and a friend and advocate of Mexican cruelty and usupretion. Why did you not pause before you took that fatal step which will stain America in such dark and foul colours that time will never effase? Did she not make you her President? And are you so debased as to forget such distinguishing favours so soon and treat her with such horrid and unheard of ingratitude? You sir justly merit the withering scorn and indignant condemnation of every American Citizen for making the oration now under review. I presume you thought yourself the Earl of Chatham and in the British Parliament thundering against the iniquitious cruety of British



warfare you speak of our Government as tring to arrest the pogress of freedom and forging manacles for the inhabitanc of Mexico and murdering without cause the innocen[t] and unoffending Indians and retaining in slavery the pure enlighend and humane Negros. Perhaps you had a design in thus speaking as the U. S. have cast you into the vortex of infamy you wish to get a foot hold in Mexico and as Sant Anna has fallen you think there is a chance to succeed him and in order to satiate your demon like revenge upon our Government excite (?) the bloodthirsty savage and the hard hearted and ignorant Negros into creuly invasion and intestinal rebellion while you with your hords of Mexican desporadoes will march on and aid the bloody intentions and finally overthrow our Country which is freedom's last hope

Yours

Q. D. RANDAL.

It was during the following winter (January 23, 1837) that Mr. Adams entered on his historic struggle over the right of petition. He then wrote as follows of Calhoun, his former associate in the Cabinet:—

WASHINGTON, 23 March, 1837.

CHARLES F. ADAMS, Boston.

MY DEAR SON, — . . . Slavery and the questions inevitably following from it will henceforth mingle with every conflict of parties in the Union. The certain and desperate assault upon the whole manufacturing interest of New England, which as sure as you live will signalize the next Session of Congress, is indissolubly interlinked with Slavery. The annexation of Texas at the hazard of a War with Mexico, which nothing but a special interposition of Providence can prevent, is entwined with the vitals of Slavery. Calhoun is spurring the Administration into a quarrel with Great Britain for three Cargoes of Slaves, driven by stress of weather into the Islands of Bermuda and the Bahamas and there emancipated. I sent you the Document containing the correspondence between the Governments of the United States, and Great Britain, upon the claims of our Slave traders for indemnity. I say *correspondence*, but it is all on one side. The first case, that of the Comet, happened in 1831. And our Secretaries of State and Envoys Extraordinary and Chargé d'affaires have been ever since pinching the successive British Administrations, for *indemnity* to the Slave traders. In six years, the only answer they have got from the British Administration is that the matter has been referred to the *Law Officers of the Crown*—and these learned Thebans have not yet learnt the distinction between the Piracy of the African, and the lawful Commerce of the American Slave trade. Calhoun made the call for the Document, and upon its production trounced Old Hickory

soundly for not being more saucy in his demands upon John Bull to indemnify the dealers in human flesh, for their PROPERTY. Calhoun's object is evidently to put stumbling blocks across the path of the little Magician. But his claim and his documents are a disgrace to our Country; and if his own political condition were not desperation he should have seen how ungraciously a call came from *him* upon the Union to sustain by War the domestic Slavery of the South, while he is making the welkin ring with clamours against the right of the Union to interfere with the domestic Slavery of the South in any manner whatever. . . .

WASHINGTON, 27 March, 1837.

KIAH BAYLEY, Esq<sup>r</sup>, Hardwick, Vermont.

SIR, — . . . You observe that I have heretofore shown, that Congress under the War power is authorized in some cases to meddle with the subject of Slavery; and you enquire whether the trade regulating power does not place the Slave question very much under the control of Congress?

But, Sir, please to observe that on the very same day, when as you think, I proved that Congress is authorized in some cases to meddle with the subject of Slavery, the House of Representatives of the United States did by a majority of one hundred and eighty two votes to nine "Resolve That Congress possesses no Constitutional authority to interfere in any way, with the institution of Slavery, in any of the States of this Confederacy"; and that, when this Resolution was passed, I asked and entreated of the house, only five minutes of time to prove its utter falsehood and was answered by . . . the Previous Question.

Of that minority of nine I was one — and three others were members from Vermont. It was also resolved on the next day by a majority of 132 votes to 45 — That Congress *ought not* to interfere in any way, with Slavery in the District of Columbia.

Upon that Resolution I asked to be excused from voting; because, not being allowed to assign my reasons for voting against it, I did not choose to expose myself to the inference that my opinion was that Congress *ought* at that time to abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia. The Resolution itself was of a piece with all the rest — absurd and false. It is not the business of one House of Congress to resolve what the whole Congress *ought not* to do. Their business is to *do* what they ought to do; and to abstain from doing what they ought not to do; without wasting their time in passing Negative Resolutions. It was therefore absurd. It was false, because there are ways in which Congress ought to interfere with Slavery in the District of Columbia — particularly to prohibit the abominable traffic which has so long dishonoured the City under their exclusive jurisdiction.



But while the Congress of the United States are in a temper to pass such Resolutions, and by such overwhelming majorities, what can I answer to your enquiries, but that every question relating to Slavery, and the Abolition of Slavery in this Union, is a question not of right and wrong, but of Power, Prudence, and Promise. Of Power, because by the Laws of God and Nature the relation of Master and Slave can never rest upon any other foundation. Of Prudence, because with an Evil so deeply seated in our vital parts there is danger, imminent danger, in giving colour to the idea, that right and wrong have any application whatever to the case. Of Promise, because we have contracted an Union with the Land of Slavery, and if you will marry into a family afflicted with Scrofula, you must not expect that the blood of your children will escape infection from the disease. We have bound up our destinies in community with the People of States encumbered with Slavery before we sealed the bond; and by the bond we covenanted to tolerate, to defend, to protect that institution as an offspring of our own, though not as our legitimate progeny. The Resolution therefore that Congress possesses no Constitutional authority to interfere, *in any way*, with the institution of Slavery in the States, has no more foundation in Peace than in War; and if it were true, the institution itself would within ten years crumble into ruin. Nothing but the *Protection*, secured to the institution of Slavery by the Constitution of the United States, sustains it now against the spirit of Abolition; and the interference of Congress was claimed to *sustain it*, in various ways, at the very time, when these Resolutions were forced through the House of Representatives, denying the authority of Congress to interfere with it in any way. What was the recommendation of President Jackson to Congress to enact Laws to suppress the conveyance of incendiary publications *by the mail*, but interference with the institution of Slavery, in the worst of ways — against the institutions of Freedom? What was the Bill, arrested at its third reading in the Senate of the United States, at the first Session of the last Congress, turning every Postmaster throughout the Union into a Catchpoll and Spy, upon the secrets of private correspondence by the Mail; with discretionary power to suppress or betray them as his caprice or party passions might stimulate; what was this but interference with the institution of Slavery, in the States? What has been the whole history of the Colonization Society, and what have been all the patronizing Acts of Congress in its favour, but interferences with the institution of Slavery in the States? Nay what is the abolition of the Slave trade itself and the prohibition of it upon pain of death, but interferences with the institution of Slavery in the States? Is not all this enough? then read the documents which I forward to you with this letter. A message from the President to the Senate of the United States — with a correspondence between the Governments of the

United States and Great Britain, of and concerning the Cargoes of three slave-trading ships, owned by citizens of the United States, and disturbed in this their lawful commerce, by the emancipation of their cargoes in the Islands of Bermuda and of New Providence. There you will see the interference of the Government of the United States not only with the Institution of Slavery in the States, but with the British Law which makes the Slave trade Piracy upon the Ocean, and with the emancipation laws of Great Britain herself.

I leave all this to your meditations; but request you not to publish this letter at present; nor without my consent hereafter. Not that I wish to conceal or disguise my opinions upon these subjects; but because I have made most of them public in other ways, and because I would not willingly contribute to agitation or excitement beyond the necessities of the time. I would cheerfully engage not to interfere with the institution of Slavery in the States in any manner, if the Slavery in the States would forbear to interfere with the free institutions of my native Commonwealth and of the Union.

WASHINGTON, 23 April, 1839.

SAMUEL WEBB, Philadelphia.

MY RESPECTED FRIEND, — . . . You believe that the question "*how can Slavery be abolished,*" the easiest part of the subject under consideration. And your plan is that the Slave holders, by Acts of their own Legislatures or other competent authority, surrender their Slaves and Real Estate to Commissioners, at their present value and receive stocks at interest, to be redeemed by the increased value of the Lands, by the Emancipation of the Slaves, and the sale of the Lands to them in small farms for their cultivation. But as the practicability of this measure depends upon its being sanctioned by the Legislatures of the Slave-holding States, I fear it cannot be expected to be made speedily palatable to them or to their constituents.

I am not sure that my own proposal which I would, if permitted, have offered to the House, has any fairer chance of success. My hopes of a *peaceable* abolition of Slavery in this Country, *at any time*, are not sanguine. To *any other* mode of abolition, I must not only withhold all voluntary agency of mine, but must avow my most determined opposition. To preserve my own freedom and that of my fellow citizens from the usurpations of Slavery, as far as may be in my power, I shall hold to be my irremissible duty. To resist as far as possible all measures adapted or intended to strengthen, support or perpetuate the institution of Slavery, I hold myself equally bound — but for its abolition, however desirable, I can countenance no appeal to force, nor any act of legislation, unwarranted by the Constitution of the United



States, or against the will of those whose interests are to [too] exclusively affected by the Law.

I am with great respect and esteem, your fellow citizen and friend —

To the Rev<sup>d</sup> JOSHUA LEAVITT and H. B. STANTON, Esq<sup>r</sup> of the Committee of arrangements of the American Anti Slavery Society — New York.

QUINCY, 11 July, 1839.

FELLOW CITIZENS, — I have received your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> ultimo inviting my attendance at the National Antislavery Convention to be held at Albany on Wednesday the 31<sup>st</sup> of the present month. To this invitation you have been pleased to add an earnest adjuration to consider this invitation as a solemn call on me to aid in the rescue of my Country; and that if I cannot attend in person, I should communicate to the Convention a written expression of my views. . . .

The Dissolution of the Union, *may* indeed be the forerunner to the Abolition of Slavery, but then it will not be effected peaceably, nor with the consent of the Masters. A civil, savage, and servile war, would be the natural, if not the necessary consequence of the dissolution of our Union, and that the result of that war would be the total abolition of Slavery throughout this Country is highly probable. If that were the avowed object of the American Anti Slavery Society, I should be compelled to acknowledge that the adaptation of their means to their ends was ingenious and skilful; but, if the imputation of being a Man stealer cast upon every Slave-holder, were one of them, I should still withhold my assent from it, as neither just nor true. . . .

Since the close of the last Session of Congress I have published in the National Intelligencer, two letters addressed to the Petitioners who had committed to my charge their petitions for presentation to the House of Representatives of the United States. Many of these petitions were for the rescinding of the Gag Resolutions of the 12<sup>th</sup> of Dec<sup>r</sup> 1838 — Against the annexation of Texas to this Union — for the promotion of universal Peace, by the Institution of a Congress of Nations — for the recognition of the Republic of Hayti — and for the prohibition of the Internal Slave-trade. To the accomplishment of all these objects I should have taken pleasure in giving my hearty cooperation. A decided majority of the House, perseveringly excluded them all from debate. With regard to the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia, and throughout the Union, I asked, but could not obtain, the permission of the House to propose three Resolutions of Amendment to the Constitution, for the total abolition of Slavery, by providing that all children born within the United States after a given and distant day shall be born free. That, after a given and nearer day, there shall be neither Slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for the commission of crime, at the seat of Government of the United States — and that, with

the exception of Florida, no Slave State shall be admitted hereafter into the Union. The House refused to receive the Resolutions, and they have met with as little favour from the Abolitionists out of the House as they did from the House itself.

That this mode of abolition will ever be found practicable, I am not sanguine in the belief; but that it is the only mode in which it could be effected peaceably, and without great injustice, I do firmly believe; and that all the attempts to the immediate abolition of Slavery by Law, without compensation to the Master, will not only prove utterly abortive, but have a direct tendency to the dissolution of the Union, and to a combined civil, servile and Savage War, I see as clearly in the prospect of futurity as I can see any event already consummated in the retrospect of the past. . . .

QUINCY, 31 July, 1839.

GERRIT SMITH, Esq., Peterborough, New York.

DEAR SIR,— I have received your kind and friendly letter of the 16<sup>th</sup> inst<sup>d</sup> with peculiar gratification, because, though written with the avowal of opinions differing from mine upon points of great importance to our common Country, it bears the impress of Christian Charity, and the marks of a spirit with which I take pleasure in communing, even while hopeless of coming to a concurrence of sentiment, with regard to one or two particular measures bearing upon objects which we have equally at heart. . . .

I am aware that the unqualified declaration of my opinion that the immediate abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territory of Florida, by *Act of Congress*, is utterly impracticable and would be eminently *unjust*, has given extensive dissatisfaction to that numerous class of my fellow citizens who call themselves, and are called by others, *abolitionists*. I have great respect for their virtuous principles and pure purposes, and regret to lose their good will. But contending as I have done, and still do, for *their* freedom of opinion and of speech, what opinion would *THEY*, what opinion would after ages entertain of me, if I should basely surrender or disguise my own. My opinion is the result of my judgment, and is not under the controul of my will. The *practicability of peaceable, immediate abolition* of Slavery by Law, in the District of Columbia and the Territories, is a mere question of fact. I say it is impracticable. You do not despair of a peaceful and bloodless termination of American Slavery — but your “hopes of such an event are faint.” But the Abolition of Slavery in the District and the Territories would not bring you one inch nearer to the *termination of American Slavery*. Would the Abolition by Act of Congress of Slavery in the District and in Florida, emancipate one single Slave? No! — for were it possible that such a Law should



be enacted, in the very progress of its passage through the Houses every Slaveholder would export his live stock into the States where it would still be held as property — It would therefore be a cruel mercy to the Slaves in the District, to abolish Slavery *there* by Law; for it would doom them all to the worst aggravation of their condition — Transportation to Southern States, and the certainty of unending servitude.

Of the speedy overthrow of the measureless iniquity of Slavery throughout this Union you are confident — but your prevailing apprehension is, that violence will accomplish the overthrow.

If the time should ever come when a majority of both Houses of Congress, and a President of the United States, would concur to enact the *immediate* abolition of Slavery in the District, without the consent and against the will of the Masters — it could be no otherwise than by a unanimous vote of the free against a unanimous vote of the slave-holding representation. But I believe that long before they can come to this extremity the slave-holding representation would secede in a mass, and that the States represented by them would secede from the Union. I know that among the abolitionists there are some leading and able men, who consider this as a desirable event. I myself believe that it would naturally, and infallibly, lead to the total abolition of Slavery, but it would be through the ultimate operation of a war more terrible than the thirty years' war, which followed the Wittemberg thesis of Martin Luther, and I shrink from it with horror. That the Slave-holders of the South should flatter themselves that by seceding from this Union they could establish their peculiar institutions in perpetuity, is in my judgment one of those absurd self delusions which would be surprizing, if they did not compose the first chapter in the history of human nature. The Slaveholders *do* so flatter themselves, and will act accordingly. . . .

QUINCY, 21 August, 1839 —

BENJAMIN D. SILLIMAN Esq<sup>r</sup> Brooklyn — Kings-County — New York —

DEAR SIR, — Your Letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> inst<sup>t</sup> affords me the opportunity not only of complying with your request, which is itself an obligation conferred upon me, but of taxing your patience more than I could otherwise have presumed to do, by enclosing to you, with the two letters to the *Petitioners*, with the presentation of whose petitions I was charged at the last session of Congress, which I presume to be the papers alluded to in your letter, three other documents developing in connection with them the full extent of the views which have regulated my conduct throughout the 25<sup>th</sup> Congress, and indeed during the eight years that I have held a seat in the House of Representatives of the United States, upon the subjects of the outraged right of petition, and

of the multitudinous petitions for the *immediate*, uncompromised abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia, and in the Territories, that is to say in Florida — These are

1. A Letter to my Constituents, the Inhabitants of the 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Massachusetts, dated 13 Aug<sup>t</sup> 1838.

2. Speech on the right of Petition, freedom of Speech, and Texas — June and July 1838.

3. Discourse before the New York historical Society 30 April 1839. And also —

4. A Letter to the petitioners of the 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Massachusetts 4 June 1839. The Letter of 13 August 1838, is a report to my Constituents, of what had occurred at the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>d</sup> Sessions of the 25<sup>th</sup> Congress, and of my proceedings in them, conformable to the Resolutions of a Convention of delegates from all parts of the District, held on the 23<sup>d</sup> of August 1837, immediately before the meeting of Congress at the special Session.

You will perceive that among the Resolutions of that Convention, there was not one having reference to the immediate abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territory, or indeed to Slavery or its abolition at all. The Convention declared their entire approbation of the course that I had before that time pursued with regard to the right of Petition and the annexation of Texas, and pledged themselves to support me in the persevering pursuit of the same course.

The peaceable abolition of Slavery, throughout this Union, has always appeared to me a consummation devoutly to be wished, and I have long entertained serious doubts whether a long continuance of the Union can be compatible with the continued existence of Slavery. My *involutionary* anticipations of the future have been that Slavery will first effect a dissolution of the Union, and that, as a natural consequence of that event, *War* will abolish Slavery, and terminate in a mongrel breed of half blood European and African race. A mulatto nation, which will cover the Southern half of this Country, from North Carolina to Mexico.

This, or the reinstitution of Slavery throughout the United States, seem to me the only alternatives for the future prospects of our Country. I have deemed it my duty to resist, *unquies et calcibus*, the encroachments of Slavery upon our free institutions, but not to follow the standard of any Peter the Hermit in a crusade against the servile institutions of the South. From my heart and soul I wish for the total extinction of Slavery throughout the earth, and especially throughout this Union ; but for my conduct as a Citizen and a Servant of the People, I must abide by the compromise in the Constitution, which I have so often sworn to support.



In Washington's farewell Address to the People of the United States, he says "all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle (of popular government) and of fatal tendency."

There is not in the farewell address one sentiment more valuable as admonition to his Countrymen than this, — I have treasured it as a jewel; and one of the worst acts of Mr. Van Buren, in my estimation, was narrowing down this maxim of all embracing patriotism into a venomous, and malignant denunciation of the antirepublican tendencies of associated *wealth*; as if the mischief of associated power was confined to the action of the *rich*.

Since the days of Washington, I have always been on my guard against partial associations to controul public measures. I have never been a member of any one of them: not even of a Temperance Society.

Associations to influence, direct, and controul the action of the Government is however the universal expedient of all parties, all interests and all opinions. We have them in numberless varieties of forms.

The Colonization Society is one of them. A vast undertaking which originated entirely with the Slave-holders, and by which the benevolence and humanity of the Northern and Eastern States continue to be egregiously duped.

The coloured Colonists of Liberia, receiving their bread and Constitutions of Sovereign independent Republics, from the American Colonization Society, form the most extraordinary communities on the face of the Earth.

The American Anti Slavery Society, composed of men not holding a single Slave, undertaking to coax and reason five millions of their fellow Citizens into the voluntary surrender of twelve hundred millions of their property, and commencing their discourse to the heart by proclaiming every holder of a Man in bondage, a *Man Stealer*, doomed by the Mosaic Law to be stoned to death, is also to the eye of a rational observer a very curious show. Peter Pindar, represents Prudence when she goes into a house, as leaving all her *opinions*, with her patens, at the door. But it would seem as if every man who enters into a political association, must leave, not only his opinions, but his common sense at the door.

I have never been permitted by the House of Representatives to give my opinions upon the abolition question generally, nor upon that of abolition in the District of Columbia. My struggle has been for the Right of Petition — freedom of Speech — freedom of Debate — freedom

of the Press. The South immediately proscribed me as an Abolitionist. The Abolitionists sent almost all their petitions to me. Many of them because their Representatives would not present them. I never gave the slightest countenance to their petitions for the immediate uncompensated abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia or elsewhere — but the South thought, and said, I did, and their Lecturers and Newspaper Editors were beginning to hold up their rod of political action, in terrorem, and to give intimations that I must subscribe to their whole creed, or take the consequence of incurring their high displeasure, I found it necessary therefore to be perfectly explicit with them; and, as I was not allowed to do it in the House, I addressed to them, the two letters which you will find herewith enclosed.

I was very earnestly invited by Mr. Leavitt and Mr. Stanton to attend the late National Anti-Slavery Convention at Albany; but declined, for reasons which I assigned to them in my answer.

If the total Abolition of Slavery be, in the purposes of divine Providence, as I believe and fervently hope it is, other agents and other means will in its own due time be employed than either American Colonization or Abolition Societies. Or if these Societies, or either of them, are to be made instrumental to the accomplishment of the grand work, they must entirely change their modes of operation, and come down from the empyrean of their fancy to the vapoury atmosphere of this nether world.

I am with great respect, Dear Sir, Your obed<sup>t</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>

President William Henry Harrison died in April, 1841, and Congress was convened in special session on the 31st of May. Mr. Adams at once pressed for an amendment of the rules of the House, by the repeal of the 21st rule, known as “the Atherton gag.” Excited debates followed, in which Mr. Adams took a leading part. Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, assumed the leading part in the debate on the other side, speaking under great excitement and with indications of extreme physical exhaustion (*Memoirs*, vol. x. pp. 478, 479). The following letter then reached Mr. Adams:—

VIRGINIA June 15<sup>th</sup> 1841

To that vile Incendiary JOHN Q. ADAMS,

On parle peu quand la vanité ne fait pas parler. This french proverb applies to all such slang whanging rascals like yourself. Is your pride of abolition oratory not yet glutted? Are you to spend the remainder of your days endeavoring to produce a civil and servile War? Do you like Aron Burr wish to ruin your Country because you failed



in your election to the Presidency. May the lightning of heaven blast you, and may the great Eternal God in His wrath curse you at the last day and direct you to depart from his presence to the lowest regions of Hell!

Is there no bold Virginian or chivalrick Carolinian ready to hurl you from the Land of the living? I think there is — Your craven spirit would quail before the menace of the outraged Southern man and nothing but a good horsewhip will serve you and you must & shall have it. You detested vindictive villain: Your motives are known it is revenge for your disappointment at the election in 1828. You are an insignificant imitator of Burr Arnold and O'Connell and deserve the gallows for your treason to your Country.

It will come sooner or later. It is not forgotten — your advocacy of Shays rebellion. The Devil will have his own when he gets your rascally soul. Beware on the 4<sup>th</sup> July \* \* \*

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[Postmark, Dumfries, Va.; endorsed in handwriting of J. Q. Adams: "Brutality."]

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Carefully reviewing this scattered record, the utterances contained in it seem to me noticeably suggestive. Possibly I am prejudiced; but, as I read them, they reveal a trained instinct amounting almost to political prescience. Indeed, in this respect I hardly know where to look for their like. Let me briefly summarize, — so to speak, focusing the rays of light. Beginning with 1820, the record extends to 1842, a period of twenty-two years; more than two generations have passed away since the latest entry in it was made; few now living remember the time of the first. What has since occurred is matter of history. Beginning with the Mexican acquisitions of 1846, we look back on the slow development of the Slavery agitation to the year 1860; then came the dissolution of the Union by the withdrawal from it of eleven States, followed by a Civil War the extent and character of which we well remember; the emancipation of the slave, by virtue of a proclamation issued by the Commander-in-Chief acting by authority of martial law, followed; finally, the Union was re-established on the principle of universal emancipation. Such is the condensed history of the period which opened five years after the record I have made up ended, and closed fifty years after that record

began. Now let me summarize the utterances. They are, I submit, those of a prophet.

1819. "His [Jefferson's] Declaration of Independence is an abridged Alcoran of political doctrine, laying open the first foundations of civil society; but he does not appear to have been aware that it also laid open a precipice into which the slave-holding planters of his country sooner or later must fall. . . . The seeds of the Declaration of Independence are yet maturing. The harvest will be what West, the painter, calls the terrible sublime."

1820. "The Missouri question has taken such hold of my feelings and imagination that, finding my ideas connected with it very numerous, but confused for want of arrangement, I have within these few days begun to commit them to paper loosely as they arise in my mind. . . . I take it for granted that the present question is a mere preamble — a titlepage to a great tragic volume. . . . The President thinks this question will be winked away by a compromise. But so do not I. Much am I mistaken if it is not destined to survive his political and individual life, and mine."

"If the dissolution of the Union should result from the slave question, it is as obvious as anything that can be foreseen of futurity, that it must shortly afterwards be followed by the universal emancipation of the slaves. . . . A dissolution, at least temporary, of the Union, as now constituted, would be certainly necessary, and the dissolution must be upon a point involving the question of slavery, and no other. The Union might then be reorganized on the fundamental principle of emancipation. This object is vast in its compass, awful in its prospects, sublime and beautiful in its issue. A life devoted to it would be nobly spent or sacrificed."

"If slavery be the destined sword in the hand of the destroying angel which is to sever the ties of this Union, the same sword will cut in sunder the bonds of slavery itself. A dissolution of the Union for the cause of slavery would be followed by a servile war in the slave-holding States, combined with a war between the two severed portions of the Union. It seems to me that its result must be the extirpation of slavery from this whole continent; and, calamitous and desolating as this course of events in its progress must be, so glorious would be its final issue, that, as God shall judge me, I dare not say that it is not to be desired."

1836. "From the instant that your slave-holding States become the theatre of war, civil, servile, or foreign, from that instant the war powers of Congress extend to interference with the institution of slavery in every way in which it can be interfered with."

"This is a cause upon which I am entering at the last stage of life,



and with the certainty that I cannot advance in it far; my career must close, leaving the cause at the threshold. To open the way for others is all that I can do. The cause is good and great."

"This acquisition of Texas, indissolubly connected as it is with the issue now making up between Slavery and Emancipation, forms a subject of contemplation too colossal for the grasp of my understanding! Is the whole continent of North America, to constitute one Confederation, or one Military Monarchy? Has Mexico been emancipated from Spain, only to be conquered by the Anglo Saxon race of *our* Union? This overflowing of our population into Texas, with the express design of breaking it off from Mexico, and annexing it to the Northern Confederacy under the law of perpetual Slavery, has an ominous aspect upon our futurity, and the facility with which it will prove that Mexico may be stripp'd of her Territories. Where will it end?"

"I believe that the final issue between Slavery and Emancipation (a word which I prefer to abolition) is to be made up on this Continent of North America. I would hope if I could that it will be made up peaceably, and settled without bloodshed — but it must come. It is approaching by such means as it is the special prerogative of Providence to employ."

1838. "The conflict between the principle of liberty and the fact of slavery is coming gradually to an issue. Slavery has now the power, and falls into convulsions at the approach of freedom. That the fall of slavery is predetermined in the counsels of Omnipotence I cannot doubt; it is a part of the great moral improvement in the condition of man, attested by all the records of history. But the conflict will be terrible, and the progress of improvement perhaps retrograde before its final progress to consummation."

1839. "The Dissolution of the Union, *may* indeed be the forerunner to the Abolition of Slavery, but then it will not be effected peaceably, nor with the consent of the Masters. A civil, savage, and servile war, would be the natural, if not the necessary consequence of the dissolution of our Union, and that the result of that war would be the total abolition of Slavery throughout this Country is highly probable."

"If the time should ever come when a majority of both Houses of Congress, and a President of the United States, would concur to enact the *immediate* abolition of Slavery in the District, without the consent and against the will of the Masters — it could be no otherwise than by a unanimous vote of the free against a unanimous vote of the slave-holding representation. But I believe that long before they can come to this extremity the slave-holding representation would secede in a mass, and that the States represented by them would secede from the Union. I know that among the abolitionists there are some leading

and able men, who consider this as a desirable event. I myself believe that it would naturally, and infallibly, lead to the total abolition of Slavery, but it would be through the ultimate operation of a war more terrible than the thirty years' war, which followed the Wittenberg thesis of Martin Luther, and I shrink from it with horror. That the slave-holders of the South should flatter themselves that by seceding from this Union they could establish their peculiar institutions in perpetuity, is in my judgment one of those absurd self delusions which would be surprising, if they did not compose the first chapter in the history of human nature. The slaveholders *do so* flatter themselves, and will act accordingly."

"The peaceable abolition of Slavery, throughout this Union, has always appeared to me a consummation devoutly to be wished, and I have long entertained serious doubts whether a long continuance of the Union can be compatible with the continued existence of Slavery. My *involuntary* anticipations of the future have been that Slavery will first effect a dissolution of the Union, and that, as a natural consequence of that event, *War* will abolish Slavery, and terminate in a mongrel breed of half blood European and African race."

"If the total Abolition of Slavery be, in the purposes of divine Providence, as I believe and fervently hope it is, other agents and other means will in its own due time be employed than either American Colonization or Abolition Societies. Or if these Societies, or either of them, are to be made instrumental to the accomplishment of the grand work, they must entirely change their modes of operation, and come down from the empyrean of their fancy to the vapoury atmosphere of this nether world."

1842. "It is a war power. I say it is a war power, and when your country is actually in war, whether it be a war of invasion or a war of insurrection, Congress has power to carry on the war, and must carry it on according to the laws of war; and by the laws of war an invaded country has all its laws and municipal institutions swept by the board, and martial law takes the place of them. This power in Congress has, perhaps, never been called into exercise under the present Constitution of the United States. But when the laws of war are in force, what, I ask, is one of those laws? It is this: that when a country is invaded, and two hostile armies are set in martial array, the commanders of both armies have power to emancipate all the slaves in the invaded territory."

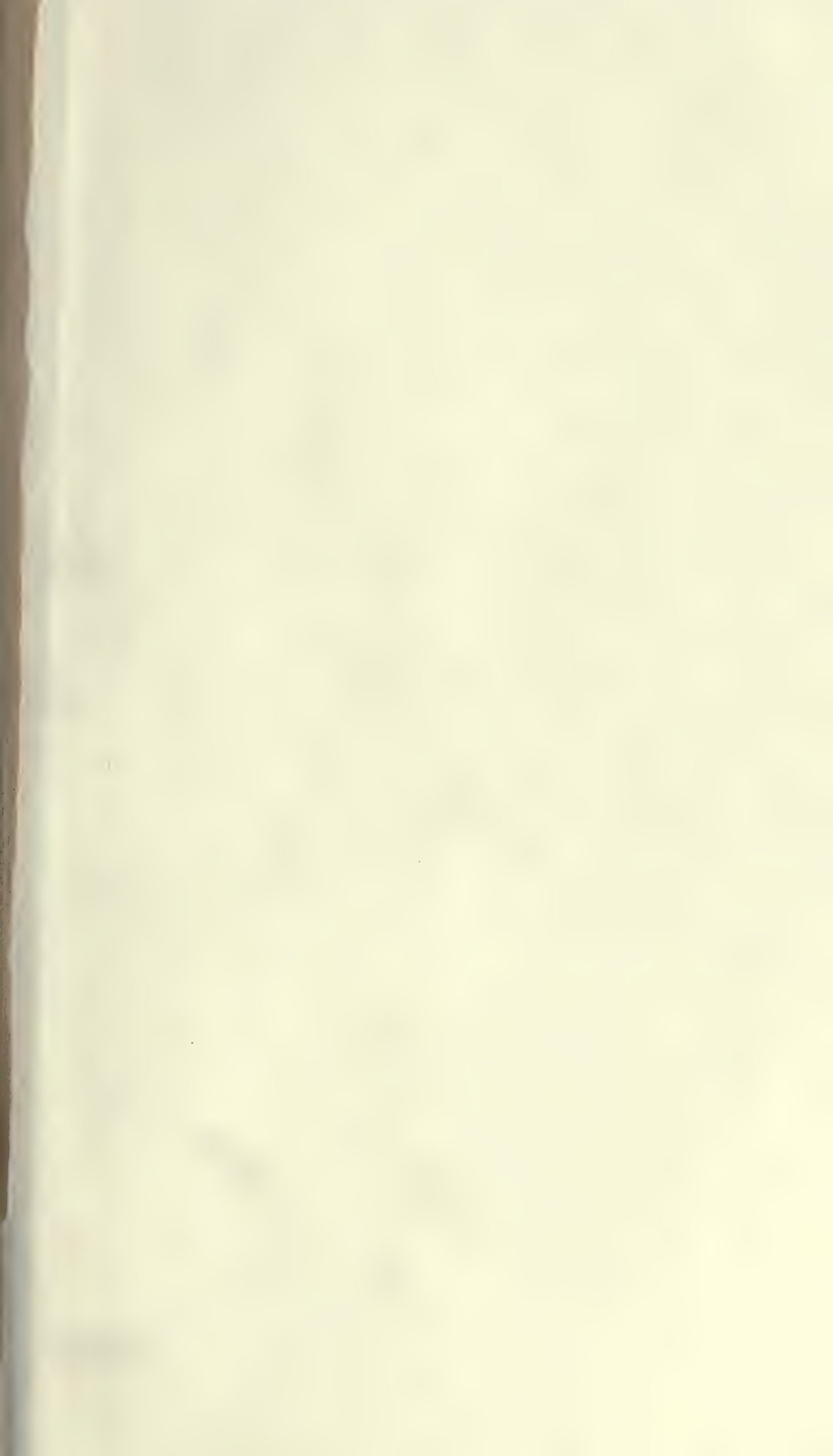
"I lay this down as the law of nations. I say that the military authority takes for the time the place of all municipal institutions, and slavery among the rest; and that, under that state of things, so far from its being true that the States where slavery exists have the exclusive management of the subject, not only the President of the United



States but the commander of the army has power to order the universal emancipation of the slaves. I have given here more in detail a principle which I have asserted on this floor before now, and of which I have no more doubt than that you, Sir, occupy that Chair. I give it in its development, in order that any gentleman from any part of the Union may, if he thinks proper, deny the truth of the position, and may maintain his denial; not by indignation, not by passion and fury, but by sound and sober reasoning from the laws of nations and the laws of war."

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